

**EQUIPPING LEADERS TO LEAD OTHERS:
A LEADERSHIP PARADIGM FOR THE
TWENTY FIRST CENTURY**

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ABSTRACT

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This research project was to effectively train and equip twelve key leaders in First Church of Newport News (Baptist) to do effective ministry. Three training sessions, six bible studies and five sermons facilitated the ground work for change. The methodology that was used to measure the project was determined by using data triangulation analysis instrument of pre-test/post-test. The project revealed that the twelve key leaders' attitudes about leadership changed slightly after effective training. In conclusion, the project reveals that twelve key leaders can be equipped to train and equip others to do effective ministry in the twenty first century.

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INTRODUCTION

Equipping leaders is one of the major challenges that many churches face. When there is effective leadership in a church, it will produce a greater harvest for the kingdom of God. This project has helped this writer and twelve key leaders to develop intellectually and spiritually as leaders. The project introduced key leaders to new models of ministries that equipped them to empower others to lead in the church and the community at large. The project developed and discovered new models that enlighten the leadership of the church even though it only lasted for six weeks.

Chapter One defines the area of ministry. The writer will discuss his spiritual autobiography, his context analysis and the synergy (the coming together of his spiritual journey and the church).

Chapter Two will discuss the state of the art in the ministry model. The writer will review the literature on leadership, liberation and theology.

Chapter Three will establish the theoretical foundation for the ministry model. The writer will give attention to the biblical, theological and historical foundations for ministry.

Chapter Four will describe the methodology and the design used in the field experience for training leaders about the paradigm of change.

Chapter Five will list the field experience of the project. It is a discussion of the methods used to collect the data and the results of data analysis. It includes the sermon series, bible study material and training session material.

Chapter Six will reflect on the overall project. Summary and conclusion will be discussed regarding the data collected. The chapter concludes with recommendations and modifications to the project for future implementations.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Spiritual Autobiography

The writer was born in Greenville, South Carolina to Mary and Tommy Lee Dawkins. He has three siblings (two sisters and a brother). They lived in a middle class community. His mother was a very religious person and his father was a weekend alcoholic. His family attended church regularly. His father would attend church on Sunday (sometime intoxicated) just to count the church money. Sometimes, his father would spend the Sunday offering during the week on alcohol and his mother had to replace the money. It was wild and crazy. He can remember spending a lot of time with his father on the weekends. His father would often take him along when he would drink and play cards. The writer's grandmother shared with him that his father was called to preach but he refused to answer the call into the ministry. Although, the writer's father died when he was seventeen, he can clearly remember his father saying "Stay off the corner if you are going to be a preacher."

During the summer, the writer and his siblings would stay with his auntie. His auntie lived in a similar environment. The writer's uncle would often get drunken everyday and then sing gospel music to them. His auntie would carry them to church, vacation bible school, Baptist Training Union, choir rehearsal and revival.

The writer was around the church all his life. It was during this time that he lived a crazy and foolish life. The writer admits to dating as many young women in the church that he could and wrestled with the call to preach. He felt like he was running from something. His life was unfulfilling and unrewarding. The writer sang in the choir and participated in the youth groups but was not saved. There was a void in the writer's life and he realized that he needed Christ. One Thursday night during the revival, he trusted Christ as his personal Savior when he was thirteen. The writer asked Christ to save him and cleanse him of all of his sin and He did it that day. The writer has trusted Him since that day. Before the writer grew in the knowledge of the Lord, he asked the Lord to save him a couple of times.

During his adolescent and teenage years, he went to a fire baptized holiness school that taught that you could lose your salvation at any time. This experience was helpful and scary at the same time. Helpful in the sense, it taught him the importance of reading and learning the scriptures. It was scary because he could lose his salvation. Every time there was an altar call, the writer would go up and get right with God. He was and still is amazed at the pressure that it put on the follower in the movement. The women were not allowed to wear makeup or pants. They were missionaries who could not preach or have authority over a man. It was a strict religious tyranny.

Call to the Ministry

The writer was called into the ministry when he was a young man. Like Jeremiah, his call was without repentance. He didn't hear voices, see lighting flashing or hear thunder rolling. However, there was a burning within him to preach the gospel.

When he was growing up and even now, he preached to everything and everybody. The writer recalls as a young man preaching in the ghetto to perfect strangers. He would walk to his auntie's house from school, stand on the corner and preach to cars passing by, dogs, cats, insects, buses, drunks, and anybody who would listen. He was not afraid of being shot, beaten or laughed at; he had a word shut up in his bones that he had to get out. His brother, sisters and neighbors would let him preach to them after church every Sunday. He also had a short revival with them during the week. He would stand on the wall and preach to them and come down and curse them out.

The writer shared with his pastor when he was fourteen years old, God was calling him into the ministry. The pastor told him to read the entire Bible and come back. When the writer finished reading the entire Bible a year later, he shared with his pastor that he still had the burning to preach. The pastor told him to read it again. The writer guessed his pastor wanted him to be sure. During this time, the writer's father died of liver disease from drinking too much alcohol. It was a sad time in his life. The writer's father and he were very close. In the midst of his death, the calling to preach became even stronger.

The writer started attending a church that was closer to home. He shared with his new pastor the call that God had on his life and his new pastor confirmed it by licensing the writer into the ministry and became his mentor. As a young preacher, the writer had an opportunity to follow and learn from his mentor who became like a father figure in his life. He was an outgoing person who loved life to the fullest. He shared with the writer the do's and don'ts for ministry. As the writer watched him go through some major storms as a pastor, the writer would often pick him up and they would ride around discussing the

dark side of the ministry. The pastor told the writer that the people he gave the most to, turned their backs on him and fought him at the same time. The pastor would tell him often, "don't get too close to the members, they will hurt you." The writer has often wondered if that is why he is sometime afraid of getting too close to some of the members. As the writer watched the pastor lead their church, the writer picked up some of his pastoral strengths and weakness. The pastor encouraged the writer to go to school to further his theological education for the ministry. The pastor left the church to start a ministry in Atlanta, Georgia.

After he left, there was a group that wanted the writer to become pastor, but the writer was contemplating moving to Indianapolis to live with his mother whose job moved her to that city. He declined the opportunity to serve his home church. After much prayer, the writer decided not to go to Indianapolis and six months later St. Matthew Baptist Church called him to be their pastor. The writer was twenty five years old when they called him to pastor.

As a young pastor, the writer dated a few young women in the church and community. It was a challenge. He started dating a young lady who broke his heart. He was preaching a revival in a nearby city and informed her that he was not coming back to town but the ride was not that long so he decided to come back. The writer went over to her house that night and discovered a friend over her house. They were in bed together and it broke the writer's heart. She told the writer to get out and he left her alone. It was an eye opening experience.

During this time, there was a group in the church (my fan club) that wanted to put me out because they discovered the young woman the writer dated was pregnant. It was all over the community and church. The writer was able to bear this storm because the baby wasn't mine. My fan club members came to a church meeting to vote me out and they were all voted out. I nearly lost my mind.

The writer started to drink and go into a state of depression. He found himself going into a shell. He would preach on Sunday morning with his clothes in the car on his way out of town, headed to God knows where. During this time, the writer was staying with his sister who put him out so her baby's daddy could move in with her. The writer lived in his truck for a few days until he found a place to live. He ask his mother to help him but she said, "No, be a man." The writer had no one to lean on but God. In the midst of his personal life falling apart, the church started to grow. God can truly bring beauty from ashes. It was in the midst of his darkest days that the writer discovered more about God and himself. Looking back, the writer became the pastor of the church the night when his fan club members tried to vote him out and they were voted out of the church.

Also, the writer stop depending on his own strength and relied on God for strength and guidance. During this pastorate, the writer developed relationships with people that he will cherish forever. When his fan club members left, he was able to start new ministries in the church. For example, we met each month to discuss how to strengthen the leadership in the church. The leaders of the church were trained and retrained to better equip them for ministry. It was doing this time that God showed the writer that he is very much in control. He showed the writer this from all the stuff that I experienced.

How Pastoral Values Were Shaped

The writer believes his values were shaped by personal relationships, work experiences and intellectual developments. He is a graduate of the public schools of Greenville County. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Christian Studies from North Greenville University in Tigerville, South Carolina. He received his Master of Divinity Degree from the Morehouse School of Religion at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia in Pastoral Care and Counselling. He received one unit in Clinical Pastoral Education from the Greenville Hospital System Pastoral Care & Education department.

These experiences have helped shape the writers understanding and appreciation for work ethics, intellectual development and personal growth. The values that he gleaned from these experiences have helped him to be the person that he is today. His father and mother stressed the importance of working hard at whatever you set your eyes upon. The writer believes that has helped shape his views concerning his personal and interpersonal relationships with others.

In the writer's personal relations, he is married to the former Alethia B. Moore of Tate, Georgia. When he met her, she was not interested in a relationship. She thought that the writer was not saved. The writer asked her on one occasion did she go out and she assumed that he was going out to clubs. He was not. She was very careful and concerned about who she dated. She gave into his constant phone calls and went out with him on their first date. She asked the writer why he starred at her because it was making her feel

uncomfortable. The writer shared with her that he like what he saw. The couple dated for two years and got married.

The week they came back from their honeymoon, a fan club member filed a law suit against the writer and the church for a half a million dollars. During this time, a former girlfriend started writing the writer's wife letters about their past relationship. She was calling the house with folly and foolishness. She sent letters to the church as well. The writer thought that his wife was going to leave him but she did not. Alethia realized that situations happen in every marriage and that she was in it for better or worse. These bomb shells strengthened our relationship. The law suit was thrown out of court and the fan club member left the writer alone for a season.

It was embarrassing and humbling at the same time. The writer had to get a restraining order against the young lady who sent him letters and made crazy phone calls. She was an agent of destruction. Through these experiences, the writer learned the value of marriage and commitment. It only takes one situation to tear down what you have tried to build in a life time. The writer learned a lot from his own personal mistakes and youthful lusts.

During the writer's work experience, he learned the value of listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit. The writer worked as a chaplain at the Greenville Memorial Hospital and pastored St. Matthew Baptist Church at the same time. It was during this time that he learned to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit. When the writer visited the hospital room of patients, they had questions that he could not answer and conditions that were unexplainable.

When the writer started clinical pastoral education, he thought he had all the answers. Over a period of time and through clinical verbatim he learned that we all have issues and he did not have the answers to fix the world. The writer recalls working one night when he received a call to counsel a young man who had received word that his future wife had been killed. The writer was full of anxiety and fear because he did not know what to say.

When the writer opened the door to the emergency waiting room, there stood a white guy with a rebel shirt, and with a chain hanging from his side. He had long hair that smelled like old rags and cowboy boots that appeared to be covered with dirt and blood. The writer informed him that he was the chaplain and that he received a call concerning his fiancée. The man started to cry and the writer placed his hand on the man's shoulder not saying a word. He started to share with me that he and his fiancée had a fight the other day and they had not reconciled. He continued verbalizing his many regrets and frustrations.

After sitting with him for an hour, just listening, his family arrived and the writer slowly walked away and he said, "Chap, thanks for everything." As the writer reflects on that experience, he recalls that he did not say anything; he just sat with the man in his pain. The writer learned that the ministry of presence is powerful. In the midst of human pain, God is yet speaking.

During his intellectual development, the writer was affirmed by his professors, peers, and persons in whom he came in contact with. He learned a lot in the class room as well as from outside the class room. When he was in high school, a counselor told his

mother and father that he could not learn because he had a learning disability. She said, "The best thing that Reggie can do is get a job and hope for the best." The writer's mother did not send me (Pay for) to school like my brother and sisters. She told me to go to work. It was after the writer started preaching that he realized that he needed an education to strengthen his intellectual development in order to strengthen the people that God had entrusted to me.

The writer's wife encouraged him to go back to school and pursue an undergraduate degree and he did. It took the writer five years to obtain, the Bachelor of Arts degree, but he has the degree. The writer was not going to seminary because he was under the impression that an undergraduate degree was sufficient. The writer visited the Interdenominational Theological Center with a friend who was interested in attending the school but the writer was not. He told the writer to pick up some information in the event that he changed his mind in the future. The writer brought the information back home and shared it with his wife and she said emphatically, "You can do that!" She gave the writer the affirmation to pursue another degree. In his mind, the writer wondered if he could really do it. The writer has a history with the master, but knew that God brought him through North Greenville in spite of the odds.

While at ITC, the writer was liberated from his biases against women in ministry and other *isms* that are outdated and outrageous. The writer has changed intellectually in many positive ways. Now when he approaches any given task, he has learned how to be more critical concerning the author, the background, the environment, and their intentions

for writing certain material. Seminary has taught the writer how to be a critical thinker and has challenged and stretched his belief system beyond his greatest imagination. For example, the debates that he had in church history with Dr. Ellingsen pushed him to defend his beliefs concerning different theories.

Dr. Ellingsen would always challenge us to use sources beyond the Bible and the primary text book. The writer always wanted to quote the Bible but he pushed the writer beyond just quoting the Bible. His process helped the writer to be a critical thinker and more diligent in his research. The writer would research the topic before coming to class so that he would be abreast of the contents of the discussion. The writer confesses, he did not like the debates initially, but now he really appreciated Dr. Ellingsen pushing the class like he did.

Also intellectually, Dr. Marshia Handy's classes in Christian Education have helped the writer realize that Christian Education is the ministry that holds all the ministries together. After taking her classes, the writer now views Christian Education as a means by which one can enhance their personal development and the process of liberation. The writer agrees with Karen B. Tye's book *Basics of Christian Education* where she states, "personal development highlights the need of an environment that nurtures all people in whatever stage they are in on their faith journey and helps them move from stage to stage."¹

As a Christian Educator, it is the writer's task to inform and enlighten those who are on the faith journey with him. It does not matter what stage they might be in; it is

¹Karen B. Tye, *Basics of Christian Education* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2001). 69.

still the writer's challenge to give them the information that they need, so that they might be transformed by God. The growth of an individual will depend on the individual taking some responsibility to believe. Many times people depend on the teachers and never take on personal responsibility.

The writer's personal growth will require many sacrifices and total commitment. The writer must continue to grow intellectually to benefit the body of Christ. The writer believes that socially, personally, and interpersonally he is becoming more inclusive and not exclusive. When the writer came to Interdenominational Theological Center, he was very exclusive of certain people who were different. For example, he did not believe in women in ministry (preaching or pastoring) because he was brought in the traditional Baptist church. But now, he realizes that God can use whomever God chooses to use. Who is he to say that God cannot use certain people? The writer has come to realize that personally and interpersonally, he is somebody's supporting actor also.

The writer has no biological children at this time. He hopes in the future that he and Alethia can have some, if it is in God's plan. The writer has adopted his sons in the ministry. He is not that much older than they are, but he feels like they are his sons. The writer has a great deal of love and respect for them. They have shared a lot of good and bad times together. The writer believes that God has appointed all of us in some way or another to a supporting role to help and aid others. The writer realizes that many times we may be unaware of it but it is true.

Kushner in his book, *Living a Life that Matters* points out that "we all know the feeling of being in the supporting actor in other people's movies, not being in the spotlight

but doing things that shape and drive the plot.”² If you really think about it, all of us are supporting actors to someone or another. The writer feels like he is a supporting actor to his sons in the ministry. For example, one Saturday one son in the ministry and the writer worked on a project together that really stressed both of them out.

The writer was asked by his son in the ministry which was candidating for the office of pastor to present them with a proposal for salary, no information was given. Before we met, the writer had him to call the church to get some information concerning their budget and financial information but they refused to give any information concerning their financial standing. The writer had never heard of or experienced anything like this before. They had been talking about the importance of being a good leader and presenting themselves in a fashion that will help and aid the overall ministry. But the writer must confess that he wanted his son in the ministry to tell the church in which he was candidating to forget it, but he did not.

The writer has come to realize that every church is not on the same level. They put together a package that addressed three different levels that the church could have been on during the time they were without a pastor. We also included an article concerning pastoral compensations and benefits for the search committee. We gave them more than what they asked for. The writer had his son in the ministry address where he thought the church was (based on persons he would see on Sunday morning and information he received through the grapevine) and the compensation that he felt that the church could pay based on his information. The writer felt like he was his supporting actor in helping

² Harold S. Kushner, *Living a Life that Matters* (New York, NY: Anchor Books A Division of Random House, Inc., , 2001), 126.

him pull this together. The writer's name was never mentioned because the writer was supporting his son in the ministry from behind the scene.

There are many more people that the writer can think of that he may have helped without saying a word. The Bible says "all that you do, do as unto the Lord." The writer tries to do what he can as though he is doing it unto the Lord. He realizes that people will take you for granted and assume that you have to do what you do, but you do not. The writer believes that God is calling all of us to a higher standard in terms of helping others as they go through their ups and downs. The writer believes that we all are supporting actors in some body's life. It may be small or great but we are there to make an impact in their lives.

Spiritually, the writer has grown to new and higher levels in his faith and commitment to the Lord. He has a new outlook on God. He has learned to appreciate the small things that God does for him daily. It amazes the writer how a God so large and so great can love a person like him. As the writer listens to professors and colleagues, He is amazed at the work that God is doing in the lives of other people as well. The writer feels that Morehouse School of Religion has helped him grow to higher levels in his commitment to Christ and the work of ministry. The writer has a deeper understanding concerning God. He is trying to keep God out of the box that he had God in when he enrolled. The writer views his spiritual walk with God as an unfolding experience. He is learning more and more about God every day.

Watershed Events in Life: That Unique Life Experience

The writer has had many water-shedding events to take place in his life but he believes that his most horrific one was when his mother died. The writer was knocked off his feet. She was not sick or elderly. She had a heart attack in her sleep. It took him by total surprise. He had just finished preaching that Sunday morning about, "a faith for turbulent times" from the book of Job. He had turned off his cell for the first time and decided that he was going to get some peace and quiet because his wife was out of town. His sisters were trying for hours to reach him concerning the news but to no avail. When his youngest sister finally reached him, he was blindsided. His life was changed tremendously. Every time she calls the writer, even now, he thinks about the call she shared with him concerning their mother. The writer shared this with her and she feels my pain.

The writer was depressed and down for a long time. Looking back, all the sermons and prayers that the writer prayed for others during their time of bereavement seemed empty and vain. It took the death of the writer's mother for him to understand that words are empty and vain during a person's darkest moment. It was the ministry of presence that helped the writer through the whole ordeal. His friends and family were there, not saying a lot but just there to help him through the moment. The writer must confess that when he visits family members of the deceased, he don't talk much, he just sit with them and process their loss along with his own. The writer believes that death can be your friend if you are ready. It has helped me to realize that we are all mortal.

What Is God Calling You to Do Now?

In October 2005, the writer accepted the call to pastor the First Church of Newport News (Baptist). It has been an interesting transition from his previous church. First Church of Newport News is in the heart of the ghetto verse St. Matthew Baptist which is in a rural area. This transition has challenged the writer to further his theological education to confront the challenges that an inner city church faces.

The writer believes that the Doctor of Ministry program will help him develop intellectually and spiritually as a teacher/pastor. The writer realizes that the program will introduce him to new models of ministries that will empower him and the community at large. As a teacher/ pastor, the writer is confronted with many challenges and situations that need the expertise of a well rounded professional. The writer hopes that he can develop and discover new methods that will transform his ministry.

He wants to continue working on developing effective leaders. Since he has been pastor of First Church, he has started intense training and recruiting for the leadership of the church. Every quarter, the church has training for the entire leadership of the church. The church is using the *Five Star Church* book as a manual. In addition to that book, the church is using *Transforming Your Ministry Into Teams* with other resources. It has helped us gain a sense of purpose and promise.

The church was without a pastoral leadership for five years and the leadership had faced many challenges. The leadership was somewhat ineffective because there was no vision for the future, a lack enthusiasm, direction, and knowledge concerning leadership. The leadership has a great desire to learn what it takes to be great leaders. The expectation

that the writer has concerning the ministry is high. He expects to see lives changed and transformed. He realizes it will take the help of the Holy Spirit to move and make persons into what God has called them to be. He also believes that the church should be an agent of change in the community.

The writer believes God is calling him to transform a generation (through leadership), that has been hurt and harmed by past experiences, individuals who develop new and refreshing experiences with God through serving the community at large.

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Newport News

Newport News is the fourth largest city in the Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News MSA—Hampton Roads. It is the fifth largest city in Virginia with a 2000 population estimated at 180,150. Newport News has been growing at an annual rate of 0.5 percent since 1990.

Newport News is part of a dynamic metropolitan region. Besides Newport News, the region contains five other cities with a population greater than 100,000. The region now has a population of more than 1.6 million and grew at a 1.17 percent annual rate from 1990 to 2007. Hampton Roads is the 31st largest metropolitan/consolidated statistical area in the nation. Its effective buying power (EBI) according to Sales, Marketing and Management is more than \$20.8 billion.

The Demographical Makeup

Newport News in many ways can be considered metropolitan America. It contains within its boundaries an urban core, a ring of older, settled neighborhoods and newer suburban development. Its citizens' age, educational, occupational and socio-economic characteristics by and large reflect the typical American demographic profile. The population in the broader Newport News is younger, somewhat better educated and slightly more white-collar than the national average. The church is located in the heart of the lower downtown. The social characteristics are males 48.4 percent and females 51.6 percent overall in the city. The African American community makes up 39.1 percent in the city of Newport News with a median age of 32. The majority of the houses (low income) in the lower downtown are occupied by African Americans. The population has decreased in the lower downtown from 2000 to 2007. In 2000, it had a population of 8,822 but now the population is estimated to be 8,426. As of 2007, the median family income estimate is \$19,559. The median household income estimate is \$16,339. The per capita income estimated in \$9,292.

The Economy

The Newport News economy is a high performer. The Newport News economy, anchored by Northrop Grumman Newport News (Newport News shipbuilding), is the turbine which powers the Virginia Peninsula's regional economy. It is a strong and stable economy. Strategic planning and a pro-business atmosphere have primed Newport News for a bright economic future in the 21st century and beyond. The Newport News economy

possesses a healthy mix of manufacturing, defense, research and technology, and office-based industries.

The Educational System

At every step of the lifetime learning experience, there are institutions of excellence in Newport News to serve educational needs. The Newport News Public School System is one of the best city school systems in Virginia, offering a variety of educational experiences and magnet programs in recognition that individual students possess different learning styles and have different career focuses. The schools that surround the church are for low-income students. Over 98 percent of the students receive free lunch. However, the Newport News public schools have won numerous awards, including twelve U. S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School awards since 1982--more than any other school system in Virginia. Among a long list other awards, all five of Newport News' high schools were recently listed by Newsweek magazine as one of America's top 100 high schools.

In addition to the city's public school system, there are several private schools located throughout the Virginia Peninsula. Dozens of pre-schools and kindergartens provide children with a head start in the educational and socialization process. In Newport News there are thirteen private elementary schools, including denominational and secular schools. Newport News is richly endowed with institutions of higher education. Within the metropolitan area, there are seven liberal arts colleges and universities, ten branch campuses and two community colleges.

Four of the universities are doctoral-level institutions and two more universities

grant masters degrees. Also, six of the ten branch facilities grant masters degrees and one offers doctoral-level programs. Additionally, the region has two law schools, an oceanographic institute and a medical college that hosts the internationally acclaimed Jones Institute, known for its work in in-vitro fertilization.

The Church

The First Church of Newport News (Baptist) is located in the heart of the lower downtown Newport News. It was the first organized religion in Newport News being established in 1864. The church was organized one year after the emancipation. Blacks in the community erected a wood framed building in the four hundred block of Twenty-Eighth Street and named it First Baptist Church of Newport News. The three thousand dollar structure, with a seating capacity of five hundred had a membership of two hundred. The Reverend Thomas Poole of Isle of Wight County was its first constituted pastor and organizer.

As time passed, the congregation purchased a site at Twenty-third and Jefferson Avenue, and moved the original frame church to this lot. Reverend Carr and Reverend C. D. Cooley were pastors of the church during this period. In 1897, the church moved again into the six-hundred block of Twenty-Fourth Street. The pastor at this time was Dr. William H. Dixon. The building of a new brick edifice began, and services continued in the old building until the new one was completed. This beautiful building with its towering steeple was a landmark on the Newport News horizon for many years. The steeple was symbolic of the pride and prestige that the congregation possessed.

Dr. Dixon led in the planning and the construction of the beautiful brick edifice at Twenty third-street and Jefferson Avenue in 1897. In later years, Reverend H. Howell Harris, Reverend W. A. Taylor, Reverend C. D. Henderson was pastors of this historical congregation. In the winter of 1919, Dr. A. A. Galvin became pastor. He organized and taught the still existing Men's Star Bible Class. During this time, the church membership grew to over fifteen hundred with three hundred fifty in the Sunday school. When the church became void of a spiritual leader again, they called Dr. John Williams to become their spiritual leader. He planned the week long spiritual enlightenment at the Eighty-Fifth Anniversary in November 1952 and extended an invitation to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to preach at the church.

Because of change in the city and deterioration of the church, lots were purchased on Twenty-Fourth and Wickham Avenue. A new church was built under the pastorate of Dr. Fred J. Boddie, Jr. (elected in 1961) and the congregation began worshipping there in November 1972. The church membership grew over the years under his pastorate. During his tenure, he promoted tithing, scholarships, an outreach program, and the aid to the needy program. He led in the liquidation of the mortgage in ten years.

Under his leadership, the church changed its name from First Baptist Church of Newport News to The First Church of Newport News (Baptist) since it was the first organized religion in the city. In November 1991, he accepted recognition given to First Church of Newport News for a twenty five thousand dollar donation to the restoration of Coburn Hall at Virginia Union University, Richmond, Virginia. Dr. Boddie retired after thirty nine and half years of service. The church searched for a pastor for five years.

In October 2005, Reginald Dawkins was elected to the pastorate. He became their eleventh pastor. He has led the church to develop wholistic ministries that will reach and teach the church and community at large. He has created and enhanced the ministries of this church. He has place strong emphasis on Christian education and Christian leadership. He is presently training the leadership of the church quarterly. He is leading the church to function as a New Testament church and creating an environment where people can be disciple and lead others to discipleship. He is leading the church to focus on the five facets of a healthy church: Worship, Evangelism, Mission, Ministry, and Exhortation.

The church has an active membership of six hundred people. The leadership and congregation are very seasoned. Sixty percent of the church is over sixty and the remained are between forty seven to twenty five. There is a small population of young people and children (sixty to seventy at most.) The church has a very rich history. During the past two years, the church has taken in over eighty people. Change has been slow to none. The church membership is highly educated with a touch of arrogance. The church is somewhat like the community, rich in history but slow in growth.

The church is located in the lower downtown area where crime, prostitution, drugs and homelessness surround the building. The church offers help to those who need assistance with their basic utilities and shelter. Also, the church feeds and clothes about two to three hundred people a week in their feed the homeless program. The Narcotics Anonymous meetings are held at the church every Tuesday evening. The community meeting is held the first Monday of every month at the church. The church has about thirty ministries and nine staff persons.

In the last few months, the church has purchase two houses that were used for selling drugs. These houses were located at the church's back door. There have been some significant changes as the church blossoms through the ashes of decline. There is a twenty year plan to purchase the remaining houses on the block, start additional ministries and build additional church facilities. The church has great potential and a bright future.

Synergy

In October 2005, the writer accepted the call to pastor the First Church of Newport News (Baptist). It has been an interesting transition from his previous church. First Church of Newport News is in the heart of lower downtown verses St. Matthew Baptist which is in a rural area. This transition has challenged the writer to further his theological education to confront the challenges that an inner city church faces.

The writer believes that the Doctor of Ministry program will help him develop intellectually and spiritually as a teacher/pastor. He realizes that the program will introduce him to new models of ministries that will empower him and the community at large. As a teacher/ pastor, the writer is confronted with many challenges and situations that need the expertise of a well rounded professional. He hopes that he can develop and discover new methods that will transform his ministry. He wants to continue working on developing strong leaders.

Since the writer has been pastor of First Church, they have started intense training and recruiting for the leadership of the church. Every month, we have training for the entire leadership of the church. The writer believes that lives will be changed and transformed. He realizes it will take the help of the Holy Spirit to move and make persons

into what God have called them to be in the world in which we live. He also believes that the church should be an agent of change in the community. God changes people and people change the community.

The church is somewhat like the community, rich in history but slow in growth. The church is located in the heart of the ghetto. Crime, prostitution, drugs and homelessness surround the church. The church offers help to those who need assistance with their basic utilities and shelter. Also, the church feed and clothes about two to three hundred people a week in their feed the homeless program. The Narcotics Anonymous meetings are held at the church every Tuesday evening. The community meeting is held the first Monday each month at the church. The church has about thirty ministries and nine staff persons.

The church is somewhat like the writer's spiritual journey. It has experienced great success and great failures but the writer believes that God is calling him to bring certainty in the midst of uncertainty. The writer thinks that the church was attracted to him because they saw potential in him, the potential to push beyond the perils of life and maintain a sense of great joy.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY PROJECT

This writer would like to examine literature that is paramount to equipping leaders for the twenty first century. In exploring the problem of ineffective leadership in the church, it is imperative that one view the ideologies and trends of thought of different authors. It is this writer's belief that every leader must be exposed to a wide view concerning leadership. This literature review will cover a broad spectrum of historical, theological, and biblical authors and editors who will challenge and enlighten the reader to a broader understanding of leadership.

Historical Perspective

These authors and editors help this writer support the historical foundation of this work. Some of the authors are not quoted in this work; however they laid the foundation for this writer to understand the concept of leadership in a broader sense.

In Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges book *The Servant Leader*, they deal with the servant leader model concerning leadership. It contends that Jesus was a servant leader for those in whom he lead. It gives a good historical perspective concerning leadership.

In Dalton Conley's book *Being Black, Living in the Red*, he deals with race, wealth, and social policy in America. Conley's persuasive analysis, the locus of current

racial inequality, resides in class and property relations, not in the labor market. It compares the wealth of the black-white differential. It also represents contributions to the race-class debate in the past two decades. Although not quoted, he helped this writer understand the racial divide in this century and its meaning to the black church.

In Gwen Ellis' book *God's Word of Life for Leaders*, she offers a devotion book about leadership and the biblical models concerning leadership. It is an excellent book for spiritual growth for leaders.

In Carol Cartmill and Yvonne Gentile's book *Leadership Essentials*, they deal with the essentials concerning leadership and the different models that the Bible presents. It shows a model about equipping the saints for service.

In Geoffrey V. Guns' book *Setting the House in Order: A Guide for Leading Change in the Local Church*, he shares a guide for leading change in the local church. It deals with how the church can bring about meaningful change with strong leadership.

In John Hendrix and Lloyd Householder's book *The Equipping of Disciples: Biblical Models of a Church's Training Ministry*, they take a serious look at discipleship and how it was a great concern for Jesus, Paul and others during the New Testament era. Although not quoted, it helped the writer understand discipleship with greater clarity.

In Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, James H. Furr book *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey*, they deal with leading change in a congregation setting. It is a practical guide for leading those who desire to bring about change in a traditional church setting.

In John Jackson and Lorraine Bosse'-Smith's book *Leveraging Your Leadership Style*, they contend that leadership is an art, not a science. The early stages of the twenty-first century, we are learning that leadership is a human endeavor that demands skills and

grace not easily learned in educational, corporate, or seminar settings. This is in the appendix where the leader discovers his leadership style from a historical perspective.

In John Maxwell's book *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, he offers a variety of leadership laws that will enable the leader to move from one stage to the next. He points out how that the leader must know his or her place in leadership.

Emmanuel L. McCall edited the book *The Black Christian Experience*. He purposes that the book has a twofold meaning: (1) provide information to white Christians about the black church and (2) "help black Baptist understand and appreciate their heritage, hoping that by doing so they could accentuate the positive and eliminate negative." These eight writers speak plainly about beliefs and practices as they know them black Baptist churches in the North and South. They share frustrations and hopes, limitations and dreams, and many problems and devotions of black believers. Although this writer did not quote him, it was helpful in understanding the black church experience.

In Lora-Ellen McKinney's book *Christian Education in the African American Church: A Guide for Teaching Truth*, she provides both theoretical and practical guidance in virtually all areas of Christian education in the African American context. She explores learning styles of young children, pre-adolescents, adolescents, and adults, including information on teaching individuals with special needs. Although this writer did not quote her, it was helpful in understanding different learning styles.

Wayne Meeks edited a book, *The New Testament in Its Social Environment: Stambaugh and Balch*, it is a discussion of the political, religious, economic, and social features of Palestine, and the cities of the Roman empire and synthesized the result of recent scholarly work, to help the reader understand the relationship between the earliest Christians and the world around them. Stambaugh and Balch lived in that Roman world,

and they shared many of its perceptions. Although not quoted, it helped this writer to understand the Roman world and its views on leadership.

In Thomas C. Oden's book *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind: Rediscovering the African Seedbed of Western Christianity*, he deals with how Africa played a decisive role in the formation of Christian culture. Decisive intellectual achievement of Christianity was explored and understood first in Africa before they were recognized in Europe and a millennium before they found their way to North America. Christianity has a much longer history than its Western or European expressions. The profound ways African teachers have shaped world Christianity have never been adequately studied or acknowledged, either in the global North or South. Although not quoted, it helped this writer in understanding the historical perspective concerning how Africa helped shape the western world view about Christianity and leadership.

In E. Stanley Ott's book *Transform Your Church with Ministry Teams*, he discusses the power of the ministry-team concept, the issues involved in transitioning a church to a team-based approach, elements involved in beginning a ministry team, and the specifics of ministry-team life. Although not quoted, it was taught during the leadership training session.

In David Ramey's book *Empowering the Leaders*, he deals with how the leader should empower those around him or her to bring about effective leadership. It is a good book for equipping the leaders for the ministry. It supported the main concept of equipping those around you for effective ministry. It helped this writer to understand the importance of equipping leaders to equip others.

In Warren H. Stewart's Sr. book *Interpreting God's Word in Blacking Preaching*, he combined marvelous new work in hermeneutics with an amazing accurate and deeply sensitive familiarity with the black preaching tradition. He writes about black heroes (preachers and their hermeneutical approach) of the faith. He had also written glowing accounts of worship in the black Brooklyn Baptist congregation where he was a member and Gardner C. Taylor was the pastor. Although not quoted, it offered a gem of information to the project especially from a historical perspective. Although not quoted, it was insight from a historical perspective.

In Charles A. Tidwell's book *Church Administration: Effective Leadership for Ministry*, he deals with the development of a theory which includes the major elements of church administration and in terms of its functions. He also dealt with the leadership models of Jethro-Moses and Jesus.

In Stan Toler and Alan Nelson's book *The Five Star Church*, they offered a contemporary approach to ministry. It assists church leaders in understanding, in a contemporary tell-it-like-it-is-style, how to build balanced ministries in every area of New Testament responsibilities. Although not quoted, it helped this writer to understand another contemporary approach to ministry.

In Lovett H. Weems book *Church Leadership: Vision Team Culture and Integrity*, he offers an interactive approach to leadership recognizing the importance of the relationship between leaders and followers. Leadership does not exist within a person; it resides in the relationship between persons. Leaders are defined by the power their followers lend them. Followers, in turn, are empowered by leaders to do more than they ever imagined (13). The task of leadership is positive change. Leaders inspire others to their best efforts in order to do better; to attain higher purposes. Leaders are not satisfied with the status quo. They are idealists who believe that things can be better; utopians who

dream of perfection. Leaders, therefore, must be change masters. They must understand how to create and guide innovation (11).

Biblical Perspective

These authors and editors assisted in the biblical foundation of the paper.

Although some authors are not quoted, they laid the foundation for understanding the elasticity of the concept of leadership.

In Michael Coogan's book *The Oxford History of the Biblical World*, he offers leading scholars compelling glimpses into the biblical world, the world in which prophets, poets, sages, and historians created the Bible. This book offers scholarship, and in chronologically ordered chapters, presents the reader with an integrated study of the history, art, architecture, languages, literatures, and religion of biblical Israel and early Judaism and Christianity in their larger cultural context.

In Leroy Eims' book *Be the Leader you were Meant to be: Biblical Principles of Leadership*, he deals with leadership. He writes that we must be certain concerning the call to leadership. When one is asked to serve in one way or another, make certain that God has ordained it. Don't budge an inch in either direction- either yes or no- until you have determined the will of God in the matter.

In James Freeman's book *Manners & Customs of the Bible*, he goes through the Bible, explaining many customs practiced in the Bible times. It is not difficult to understand, and it is also filled with many helpful illustrations.

In Geoffrey Guns' book *Spiritual Leadership: A Guide to Developing Spiritual Leaders in the Church*, he asserts that the church, being a spiritual organism is called into

being by God to achieve the purposes of God in the world. Therefore, those who lead are called by God to fulfill God's purpose and not their own agenda.

In Robert Greenleaf's book *Servant Leadership*, he deals with some interesting things about leadership and how the leader should be a servant first and all other things would fall in place. He offers ten practical suggestions to strengthen leadership.

In Stephen L. Harris' book *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction 3rd ed.*, he deals with various theological positions and scholars from various points of view. He shows how liberation fits into the scheme of the God human experience.

In William R. Herzog's II book, *Prophet and Teacher: An Introduction to the Historical Jesus*, he deals with the historical facts concerning Jesus. It offers the reader insights on Jesus as a prophet and teacher.

In Floyd Massey Jr. and Samuel Berry McKinney's book, *Church Administration in the Black Perspective*, they provided a guideline for developing effective organization of church boards and committees as well as the overall church administrative structure based on the experiences of the African American Christian community. The text also explores how the African heritage and slave experiences have molded traditions that are significant in modern black church life. Although not quoted, this book assisted in understanding church administration from a black perspective.

In Tom Sine's book, *Taking Discipleship Seriously: a Radical Biblical Approach*, he takes a serious look at discipleship and how it strengthens the believer. It offers a strong biblical approach to leadership. Although not quoted, it helped this writer understand the importance of discipleship training.

In John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck's commentary *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, they deal with the interpretation of various books of the Bible. It is very contemporary in its discussion concerning biblical passages.

In Warren W. Wiersbe's book, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*, he outlines the Old Testament in narrative form. It gives a vivid look at the Old Testament from a contemporary perspective. The outlines are very detailed and insightful due to its narrative genre.

Theological Perspective

These authors and editors assisted in supporting the theological foundation of this work.

In James Cones' book, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, he deals with liberation theology. He believes that it is a rational study of the being of God in the world in light of the existential situation of an oppressed community, relating the forces of liberation to the essence of the gospel, which is Jesus Christ.

In James H. Evans' Jr. book, *We Have Been Believers*, he seeks to overcome the chasm between church practice and theological reflection, Evans situates theology squarely in the nexus of faith with freedom. It shares monumental theological arguments concerning liberation theology.

In David Ford's book, *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century*, he introduces the thoughts of the many leading twentieth-century Christian theologians, and movements in theology.

In Shirley C. Guthrie's book, *Christian Doctrine: Revised Edition*, she presents a book that is grounded in scripture, conversant with the reformed confessions and tradition, and remarkably relevant to the daily experience of the world. It offers help in understanding the Christian faith.

In Joseph H. Johnson's book, *Proclamation Theology*, he deals adequately with black theology. He argues the theological differences between James Cone and other theologians. Johnson provides this material to compare and contrast the difference in Cone, Barth, Bultman and Mitchell to name a few.

In Cleophus J. Larue's book, *Power in the Pulpit: How America's Most Effective Black Preachers Prepare Their Sermons*, the writers were encouraged to pursue their own unique method of preparation. They were asked to reflect on and bring to conscious formation the methodological process they engage in each week. They were not privy to one another's work and were given the freedom to pursue their own particular take on the process.

In Richard Lischer's book, *The Company of Preachers: Wisdom on Preaching, Augustine to the Present*, he deals with the voices that constitutes the church's homiletically tradition. It is arranged in seven divisions with between six and eleven selections under each division. There is a brief introduction to each selection and an attempt to maintain a conversation between the positions represented in the various selections. It was helpful in understanding the church's homiletically tradition and its theology.

In Leon Morris' book, *New Testament Theology*, he looks at what the New Testament authors meant. This is not an academic exercise, but a necessary prelude to our understanding of what their writing means for us today. It takes a fresh look liberation theology.

In Donald Musser and Joseph L. Price's book, *A New Handbook of Christian Theologians*, they discuss human liberation yet asserting Womanist theologians who stated that "though they believe in the Bible, the Bible has historically served as a tool of oppression against women and ethnic and sexual minorities."

In J. Deotis Roberts' book, *Africentric Christianity: a Theological Appraisal for Ministry*, he points out that the history of Israel and the New Testament description of the historical Jesus reveal that God is identified with Israel because it is an oppressed community. The resurrection of Jesus means that all oppressed peoples become his people.

In David Smith's book, *A Handbook of Contemporary Theology*, he claims that liberation must be understood in its totality as removal of all which keeps the African in bondage, and all that makes him less than God intended him to be. The idea is that Jesus has the power to liberate from fear, illness, and evil, as well as oppression, racism, and exploitation.

In Edward L. Smith's book, *The Doctrine of Providence & Revelation: an Introduction to Philosophy and Theology*, he points out that Israel was the first elect, and divine election also encompassed the Gentiles. A remnant remains in every group that God has chosen depicting God's righteousness.

In Terry Thomas' handout, *An Exploration into the Task of Leadership*, lecture notes from cluster group. He offers a helpful guide for leaders to explore the task of

leadership. It is impregnated with usable insights that will awaken the leadership style in leaders. It holds rich theology, biblical and historical information to aid the leader in understanding leadership roles.

In Owen C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra's book, *Introduction to Theology*, they deal with the exodus from Israel, Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God and his ministry, along with his death and resurrection, as key biblical events. Liberation entails two things: the thorough transformation of oppressive socioeconomic, political, and cultural systems into systems that promote the well-being and just treatment of all persons; and the coming into full humanity and dignity of those who have been oppressed, marginalized, or subjugated. These two aspects must be achieved together; one does not precede the other.

In Cornel West's book, *Race Matters*, he points out that "quality leadership is neither the product of one great individual nor the result of odd historical accidents. Rather, it comes from deeply bred traditions and communities that shape and mold talented and gifted persons. Without a vibrant tradition of resistance passed on to new generations, there can be no nurturing of a collective and critical consciousness- only professional conscientiousness survives."

In Gustavo Gutierrez's book, *We Drink From Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of A People*, he looks at the theology of Latin America and its relation to liberation theology. He points out that liberation theology was birthed in Latin America. It hails from the wells of our own experiences as we relentlessly pursue liberation.

In Robert Dale's book, *Pastoral Leadership*, is a comprehensive problem solving reference for pastors that provide theological foundations and experiences tested techniques for effective clergy leadership.

In Doris Kears Goodwin book, *Team of Rivals*, is about an elegant incisive study of Lincoln and leading members of his cabinet that will appeal to experts as well as to those whose knowledge of Lincoln is an amalgam of high school history and popular mythology.

In Alexander B. Bruce book, *The Training of the Twelve*, is about the lesson and patterns in ageless management principles employed by Jesus with His disciplines are an excellent model for those who seek greater depth and stability in the Christian church today.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Theological Foundations

If church leaders [at this institution] are to be transformed into spiritually responsible and impactful individuals, a theology of liberation must be the foundation of this God-mandated experience because it will show them how God is liberating his people. Church leaders must believe not only in the biblical and practical aspects of church work, but that the work of the church is ordained by God. They must have a reasonable understanding of the freedom that is inherent in liberation theology. Church leaders need to accept the fact that they, themselves, have been an oppressed people due to their inability to perceive, or bring into being, a community that espouses the concept of liberation theology. In other words, one cannot effectively deliver or produce something in which one does not believe or does not practice.

This writer believes that church leaders, both lay and clergy, must have a level of theological training, as presented by the pastor, that is consistent with their leadership responsibilities. Therefore, in order to assist the pastor with infusing liberation theology into the larger congregation, it is of utmost importance that leaders, especially those who will pioneer this *leadership paradigm project*, allow themselves to not only experience

the real freedom of God, through Jesus Christ and this faith community, but better understand their expanding role of exemplars in liberation theology.

First, leaders must keep in mind that liberation theology is at the center of the Christian religion. Jesus started his ministry with the words, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."¹ Christ's messages pointed directly to liberating those who were oppressed. His whole mission was to bring about liberation. Liberation theology leads to the emancipation of a people who have been oppressed by their taskmasters. James H. Cone, in *A Black Theology of Liberation*, claims, "It is a rational study of the being of God in the world in light of the existential situation of an oppressed community, relating the forces of liberation to the essence of the gospel, which is Jesus Christ."² This researcher believes that this is the central mark of leadership in this community. It is indeed a theology that focuses on the liberation of the oppressed.

This researcher believes that leaders must have a sense of liberation for those who are oppressed. The sole reason for Christian Theology to exist, according to Cone, "is to put into ordered speech the meaning of God's activity in the world, so that the community of the oppressed will recognize that its inner thrust for liberation is not only consistent with the gospel, but is the gospel of Jesus Christ."³ There can be no good

¹Lk 4:18-19, *The Holy Bible: New International Version*, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996)

²James Cone, *A Black Theology Of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990), 1.

³Ibid.

Christian theology if it is not connected with the downcast and under privilege. God was about liberating those who were on the bottom of the social order.

Secondly, leaders must keep in mind that the exodus was a part of God's liberation plan. When looking at the exodus sojourn, readers must keep in mind that Moses was not only a great leader but he was a liberator. God was leading him to bring about liberation in the lives of the Israelites. Scholars have similar assessments concerning the exodus sojourn and its significance to liberation. J. Deotis Roberts asserts that:

The 'Exodus Paradigm' is, for Cone, the exegetical perspective for understanding God's liberating message for the oppressed. It is also a clue for understanding the Old Testament, because biblical interpretation for Cone is grounded Christologically. The Exodus motif is reinforced by the Lukan text (Luke 4:18-19), which describes Jesus' sense of mission, the 'liberation' of humankind. Cone writes that 'if the history of Israel and the New Testament description of the historical Jesus reveal that God is a God who is identified with Israel because it is an oppressed community, the resurrection of Jesus means that all oppressed peoples become his people. Herein lies the universal note implied in the gospel message of Jesus.'⁴

This writer believes that the message that God exemplified through delivering His people from oppression should be the same message that First Church leaders exemplify when liberating the people in whom God has called them to lead. The message was a message of hope that God is moving his people to a place greater than where they have been. Richard Bondi asserts that, "Moral leadership has to do with ensuring that the direction and form of that movement allow people to discover the true destination of their restless hearts and to live that out in a world full of voices calling us to other

⁴J. Deotis Roberts, *Africentric Christianity: A Theological Appraisal For Ministry* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2000), 45.

destination.”⁵ If liberation is to take place, there must be people who are willing to move in the direction God is leading and accept the changes that liberation will bring.

Third, when speaking of Christian theology and liberation, this researcher asserts that the leader must realize that the exodus of the children is a perfect picture of a God who is the God of and for those who labor and are heavy burdened. Owen C. Thomas, in *Introduction to Theology*, points out that God’s activity can be trace in human history. He states,

Thus it might be expected that the most revealing area of God’s activity would be human history. But why is the history of Israel more revealing of God than the history of other nations? The answer from Israel is that God has chosen Israel for this purpose so that she may become a witness to God before the nations of the world. As to why Israel was chosen rather than another nation, there is no answer except the mystery of the divine choosing.⁶

This researcher contends that First Church has been chosen to do a greater work for God in the area of liberation. It is important for leaders to view God as a deliverer of the people. There are people surrounding the church and in the church that need a God who can liberate them from oppression. The context must keep in mind that Israel deliverance certainly was not because Israel had a great attitude or disposition but they had the divine favor of God. God was liberating them from their oppressor.

In conclusion, it is through liberation that God used leaders to deliver God’s people from the snares of being marginalized. The task of liberation is so vital, as Owen Thomas points out, “The exodus from Israel, Jesus’ proclamation of the

⁵Terry Thomas, *An Exploration into the Task of Leadership*, lecture notes from cluster group, Handout. 8.

⁶Owen C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra, *Introduction to Theology* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 32.

kingdom of God, and his ministry, along with his death and resurrection, are key biblical events. Liberation entails two things: the thorough transformation of oppressive socioeconomic, political, and cultural systems into systems that promote the well-being and just treatment of all persons; and the coming into full humanity and dignity of those who have been oppressed, marginalized, or subjugated. These two aspects must be achieved together; one does not precede the other.”⁷

This researcher contends that it is the responsibility of the total leadership in this context to aid and assist those who are marginalized by society and give them the helping hand that they need. Leadership must have a strong desire to see transformation of oppressive socioeconomic, political, and cultural systems into systems that will aid and support those who have been marginalized. Therefore, this writer would like to explore three aspects of liberation that will strengthen the leadership and bring about a paradigm of change. This researcher will examine God as a liberator, Jesus as a liberator, and how human liberation is depicted throughout the Bible.

God As A Liberator

When one talks about theology, it is a talk about God. Joseph A. Johnson, in *Proclamation Theology*, points out that theology is “a study of God, who has made his decisive revelation in Jesus Christ, for man’s salvation, liberation, and reconciliation. The God-talk of theology should not obscure one’s obvious fact, that it is man who speaks to God and in God-talk, man seeks to understand his relationship to that absolute reality

⁷Ibid., 192.

called God.”⁸ It is through liberation theology that we see and sense God delivering an oppressed and disenfranchised people. If theology is to be discussed, it must arise from the treatment that God is a liberator of the oppressed.

This researcher will examine five central points about God bringing about liberation to his people. The central points:

- (1) God uses a process to liberate them.
- (2) God elected Israel to be His people.
- (3) God appointed a leader by the name of Moses in spite of his insufficiency.
- (4) God is at his best when liberating those who are oppressed by the hand of the oppressor.
- (5) In the history of God’s revealed word, the Bible indicates how very active God is advocating for the poor and less fortunate because of His love for them.

It is clear that God uses a process to bring about liberation to the oppressed. Cone claims,

It may not be entirely clear why God elected Israel to be God’s people, but one point is evident. The election is inseparable from the event of the exodus: You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all people... (Exodus 19:4-5a).⁹

It is clear to this writer that God is concerned about the liberation of God’s people. Liberation is achieved through God’s process. It is through this process that the people of God depend on God to take them from bondage to freedom. God always identifies with oppression. The oppressed become His people. According to Cone, “If the history of Israel and New Testament description of the historical Jesus reveals that God is

⁸Joseph A. Johnson, *Proclamation Theology* (Shreveport, LA: Fourth Episcopal District Press, 1977), 132.

⁹Cone, 2.

a God who is identified with Israel because it is an oppressed community, the resurrection of Jesus means that all oppressed people become his people.”¹⁰ The oppressed are connected with a God who sees them in their oppressive conditions and delivers them from them all.

God has elected Israel to be His people in whom He would liberate from oppression. To be elected or chosen by God is a central theme for the children of Israel. Like the children of Israel, this context has being chosen to do the work of liberation. Owen Thomas argues that, “the fundamental theme of these doctrines is the conviction of the biblical authors that God has chosen Israel to be God’s own people and to be the agent or instrument in the fulfillment of the divine purposes for humanity.”¹¹

God elected the children of Israel to bring about a plan in which the Messiah would ultimately come. Although they were elected by God, it is a common practice of God to select groups and individuals to bring about his perfect plan in the world. Edward Smith, in *the Doctrine of Providence & Revelation: an Introduction to Philosophy and Theology*, points out that John Calvin claimed that:

Israel was the first elect, and divine elect also encompassed the Gentiles. A remnant remains in every group that God has chosen depicting God’s righteousness. However, Calvin wanted to move away from the group concept and closes here stressing the significance that God chooses “individuals.” Divine Election then, becomes a personal and individual concern. Salvation involves an individual relationship with God through Jesus Christ.”¹²

¹⁰Ibid., 3.

¹¹Thomas and Wondra, 211.

¹²Edward L. Smith, *the Doctrine of Providence & Revelation: an Introduction to Philosophy and Theology* (Riverdale, GA: The Research Center Press, 2001), 47.

In the believer's relationship with God, they discover that perfect and divine purpose that God has in store for the believer. Church leaders who lead others must have a relationship with God so they can reach others for the glory of God.

God appointed a leader by the name of Moses to be their leader in spite of his insufficiency. Moses discovers in his conversation with God that in spite of his insufficiency God was going to deliver his people. This researcher contends that like Moses, we all have insufficiencies but we realize that leadership should not be avoided. God informs Moses that God was going to liberate because God saw their oppression. This is the very nature of a liberating God who sees the hardships and persecutions of a people. God is always moving God's people to a place of liberation and freedom. Bondi asserts, "Leadership has to do with the movement of people through time and change."¹³ Although Moses felt insufficient, God still used him to bring about liberation. Exodus chapter three gives this account of the liberating attributes of God and the choosing of a leader who feels insufficient:

"The LORD said, 'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.' But Moses said to God, 'Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?' And God said, 'I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When

¹³Thomas, 18.

you have brought the people out of Egypt, you^a will worship God on this mountain.” Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?” God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.”^b This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD,^c the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.”¹⁴

It is clear that God saw the oppression of his people and sent Moses to liberate them from the oppressor. It appears that Moses felt insufficient but God still chose him to be their leader. Cone points out “by delivering this people from Egyptian bondage and inaugurating the covenant on the basis of that historical event, God is revealing as the God of the oppressed, involved in their history, liberating them from human bondage.”¹⁵

It is interesting to note that theologians view God from many different angles and perceptive as it relates to liberation. Owen C. Thomas points out that, “womanist theology focuses on the biblical picture of Jesus rather than philosophical and theological discussion of the person of Christ. Jesus’ ministry with the poor, the outcast, and the oppressed reveals the true character of God: ‘God is as Jesus does.’ Further, Jesus’ death and resurrection manifests God’s ability and willingness to ‘make a way out of no way,’

^a The Hebrew is plural.

^b Or *I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE*

^c The Hebrew for *LORD* sounds like and may be derived from the Hebrew for *I AM* in verse 14.

¹⁴ Exodus 3:7-15.

¹⁵ Cone, 2.

overcoming the seeming hopelessness of the oppressed.”¹⁶ It appears that European theologians view God from a philosophical and theological understanding without looking into the lens of the oppressed. If theology is going to be relevant, it must speak to the ills in all communities.

It appears to this writer that God is at God's best liberating those who are oppressed by the hand of the oppressor. Leonardo Boff, in *The Modern Theologians*, claims, “liberation theology adopts ‘the Exodus as a paradigm of all liberation,’ with liberation from (the oppression of Pharaoh) and liberation to (entry into the Promised Land). But the agency of liberation has now been given to a new Israel: ‘God is no longer the old God of the Torah,’ but ‘a God of infinite goodness...He draws near in grace, going far beyond anything prescribed or ordained by the law.’”¹⁷

As God liberates God's people, God is not confined to a set of rules, regulations, or hidden agendas. When church leaders realize the awesomeness of God's power, they can be assured that God has the power to work the impossible. This needs to be reinforced because of their need to exercise more faith. This researcher contends that God is genuinely concerned about the oppression of God's people. Cone claims that:

Later stages of Israelite history also show that God is particularly concerned about the oppressed within the community of Israel. The rise of Old Testament prophecy is due primarily to the lack of justice within that community. The prophets of Israel are prophets of social justice, reminding the people that Yahweh is the author of justice. It is important to note in this connection that the righteousness of God is not an abstract quality in the being of God, as with Greek philosophy.¹⁸

¹⁶Thomas and Wondra, 175.

¹⁷David Ford, *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1997), 616.

¹⁸Cone, 2.

It is interesting to point out that whenever there is injustice in a society, God always raises up a prophet. The prophet Job is to speak on behalf of the oppressed and for God. The prophet speaks about how God is concerned about oppression and the disenfranchised.

In the history of God's revealed word, the Bible indicates how active God is in advocating for the poor and less fortunate because of God's love for them. According to Cone, "it is rather God's active involvement in history, making right what human beings have made wrong. The consistent theme in Israelite prophecy is Yahweh's concern for the lack of social, economic, and political justice for those who are poor and unwanted in society. Yahweh, according to Hebrew prophecy, will not tolerate injustice against the poor; God will vindicate the poor."¹⁹

The poor have a divine helper who steps into their situation and bring about an awesome transformation from oppression and conformation of His great love. It is the very nature of God to set at liberty those who were marginalized and oppressed. J. Deotis Roberts argued that the theme of love is just as important as God's freedom. This love according to Roberts, "heals the brokenness between [people], it overcomes estrangement, and it brings people together it reconciles. Love is compassion. Love is redemptive... God is love; love is God."²⁰

This researcher contends that it is the task of leadership to push and promote the love of God to the marginalized and oppressed people because it is at the very heart of God's nature to liberate those marginalized and oppressed.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰James H. Evans, Jr., *We Have Been Believers* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 70.

God is using a process to bring about liberation to the oppressed. God has elected Israel to be God's people in whom God would liberate from oppression. God appointed a leader named Moses; even thou Moses felt insufficient to be their leader. In the midst of liberating God's people, God is at God's best liberating those who are oppressed by the hand of the oppressor and advocating for the poor and less fortunate because of God's love for them. These are Gods mighty acts of liberation.

Jesus As A Liberator

The overall theme of the New Testament is liberation. It is this researcher belief that the New Testament affirms that Jesus was a liberator. As previously stated, Jesus started his preaching ministry with these words: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord"²¹ This is a direct response to the oppression and suffering of God's people. Jesus has an agenda to liberate the people of God from their oppressor. Six liberating facts about Jesus as a liberator will be explored. The six liberating facts include:

- (1) He started the ministry dealing with the forces that had Gods people in oppression.
- (2) His public ministry focused on those who were marginalized and considered the outcast.
- (3) His messages and life was about liberation and justice for all.
- (4) His religion is a clear response to the oppression and suffering of His people.

²¹Lk. 4: 18-19

(5) He had many followers but he equipped the twelve to turn the world upside down to institute change in a world that resisted change.

(6) He taught and equipped the twelve concerning liberation.

Jesus started the ministry dealing with the forces that had God's people in oppression. Jesus enters conflict with Satan and the power of the world; He is at war to liberate God's people from bondage. Cone has suggested that, "the conflict with Satan and the powers of this world, the condemnation of the rich, the insistence that the kingdom of God is for the poor, and the locating of his ministry among the poor- these and other features of the career of Jesus show that his work was directed to the oppressed for the purpose of their liberation. To suggest that he was speaking of a 'spiritual' liberation fails to take seriously Jesus' thoroughly Hebrew view of human nature. Entering into the kingdom of God means that Jesus himself becomes the ultimate loyalty of humankind, for he is the kingdom."²²

The gospel of Luke deals with the poor and the disfranchised as well. Warren W. Wiersbe points out "In this Gospel you meet individuals as well as crowds, women and children as well as men, poor people as well as rich people, and sinners along with saints. It's a book with a message for *everybody*, because Luke's emphasis is on the universality of Jesus Christ and His salvation: "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."²³ Jesus is liberating God's people. Human beings are liberated to fight against the forces of the world. The very fact that Jesus arose from the grave means that God's liberating work is not only for the house of Israel but also for all who are enslaved by

²²Cone, 3.

²³Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, "An Exposition of the New Testament Comprising the Entire 'BE' Series"--Jkt. (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996, c1989), Mk 16:19.

principalities and power of this world. David L. Smith argues that Jesus Christ was a liberator who is seen as Savior, Redeemer, and Power. He points out that,

Closely tied is the concept of Christ as Liberator. 'Liberation must be understood in its totality as removal of all that which keeps the African in bondage, all that makes him less than God intended him to be.' The idea is that Jesus has the power to liberate from fear, illness, and evil, as well as from oppression, racism, and exploitation. That Jesus identified in His own earthly life with the poor, needy, and defenseless endears Him all the more to black Africans.²⁴

This researcher asserts that the total leadership has to focus on these ills by becoming more responsible in their quest to be like Him. It is through the equipping of leaders that the church can deal with these ills. Leadership must have a kingdom agenda that liberates the mind, body and soul.

The public ministry of Jesus focused on those who were marginalized and considered the outcast. Owens C. Thomas claims that:

Jesus proclamation of the reign of God is enacted in healing the sick, which are also marginalized and impoverished by their illnesses, in casting out demons, and in befriending prostitutes and sinners, viewed as outcasts by the religious establishment. Jesus ministry proclaims and shows the God of life, and his suffering and death are acts of the powers of death in response to the life he has lived and the message he has proclaimed; God's resurrection of Jesus vindicates both Jesus' life and God's will for life abundant in opposition to the forces of death.²⁵

The followers of Jesus continued to focus on the ministry for the downcast and the oppressed. The followers knew that if they receive the downcast and the oppressed, they received the Lord and His blessing. Jesus said in the gospel of Matthew, "I tell you the truth, anything you refused to do for even the least of my people here, you refused to

²⁴David L. Smith, *A Handbook of Contemporary Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1992), 217.

²⁵Thomas and Wondra, 192.

do for me.”²⁶ Thomas claims “special concern for the marginalized continues in the earliest church’s focus on ministry to the poor, widows, and outcasts, and in the decision to hold possessions in common. Paul criticizes the church in Corinth for allowing socioeconomic status to disrupt the church as it gathers for the Eucharist and fellowship. The church’s mission includes continuing Jesus’ own ministry of proclamation of good news to the poor and the captive.”²⁷

This researcher believes that the leadership of First Church should allow the same mandate that Jesus proclaim to be the same mandate by which they do ministry. The mandate was to preach the good news to the poor and set at liberty those who are oppressed. It is imperative for the church leaders of First Church to keep the mission and ministry for the least of these. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr. and Howard Thurman, “oppression contravenes every aspect of this ‘beloved community.’”²⁸

Jesus spent his time and ministry preaching to this beloved community. This infested community was full of injustices, moral decay, and social unrest. It is the responsibility of the First Church and its leaders to address injustices, moral decay and social unrest by having programs and ministries that will combat these needs.

Jesus messages to people in general and life style were about liberation and justice for all. James Evans point out that Howard Thurman in his book *Jesus and the Disinherited* takes a serious look at, “what is the significance of the religion of Jesus for ‘people with their backs against the wall.’ Second, why is it that Christianity is impotent

²⁶*The Everyday Bible: New Century Version* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005), Mt 25:45.

²⁷*Ibid*, 194.

²⁸ *Ibid*.

in dealing effectively with the issues of discrimination and injustice on the basis of race, religion and national origin. For Thurman, it is not a question of the moral obligation that Christianity lays upon those who have much, but the existential meaning of Christianity for those who have little or nothing.”²⁹ The crucial question according to Thurman related to, “Who is Jesus for the downtrodden?”³⁰ According to Evans, Thurman identifies three central features of Jesus in the biblical narratives. These three central features are paramount to the overall theme of Jesus being a liberator.

First, Jesus was a Jew. Since he was a Jew, he had a specific ethnic, racial, and religious identity. Thurman believes, “it is impossible for Jesus to be understood outside of the sense of community which Israel held with God... The Christian Church has tended to overlook its Judaic origins, but the fact is that Jesus of Nazareth was a Jew of Palestine when he went about this Father’s business, announcing the acceptable year of the Lord.”³¹

Second, Jesus was a poor Jew. Since he was a poor Jew, according to Evans, “his condition of material want cemented his solidarity with the poor of his time. Further, his poverty takes on added significance in the light of his designation as the human one, or the Son of Man.”³² The researcher believes this is significant because as a liberator he can relate to those in whom he is liberating. He is not a liberator who is in a far and distant land. It is important that the First Church keep in mind that we are agents of light in the midst of darkness. They cannot be aloft to human degradation.

²⁹Evans, 83.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid., 84.

³²Ibid.

Thurman points out, "the economic predicament with which he was identified in birth placed him initially with the great mass of men on earth. The masses of the people are poor. If we dare take the position that in Jesus there was at work some radical destiny, it would be safe to say that in his poverty he was more truly Son of man than he would have been if the incident of family or birth had made him a rich son of Israel."³³

Third, Jesus was a member of an oppressed minority. He shared the oppression that comes with the community. The Roman Empire oppressed the Jews of Palestine in their social and political context. Jesus grew up in this particular context. Thurman points out, "it is utterly fantastic to assume that Jesus grew to manhood untouched by the surging currents of the common life that made up the climate of Palestine. Not only must he have been aware of them; that he was affected by them is a most natural observation."³⁴ These experiences help shape the religion of Jesus. They will also help shape the values of this context as well.

The religion of Jesus is a clear response to the oppression and suffering of his people. Thurman argues that Jesus had two options in the Israelite culture in relation to Rome. He points out that the "first option was nonresistance, in which the oppressed Jews could either imitate the dominant group or assimilate their culture and traditions, or simply withdraw, as far as possible, from the oppressive group and be content with occasional displays of contempt.

The second option was resistance, which manifests itself most often in armed struggle. This type of resistance has its appeal among the oppressed, but that appeal is

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

often tragic in the sense that it must destroy part of what it seeks to preserve.”³⁵ Thurman believes that the religion of Jesus is a different form of resistance; a resistance that is summed up in the statement that Jesus made the kingdom of God in us. Evans states that, “this internal, or spiritual, liberation is not sought at the expense of social and political freedom. In fact, Thurman states that an otherworldly focus in religion is the Achilles’ heel of traditional Christianity. ‘The desperate opposition to Christianity rests in the fact that it seems, in the last analysis, to be a betrayal of the Negro into the hands of his enemies by focusing his attention upon heaven, forgiveness, love and the like.’”³⁶

It appears to this researcher that the religion of Jesus is a clear response to the oppression and suffering of his people. It is through suffering that Jesus understood the despair and dilemmas of his people. Leadership must understand that suffering is a part of the journey. As leaders, there must be an anticipation of some suffering along the way. Thurman makes an important argument that Jesus is a direct response to the uproar and injustices of the oppressed. He claims that:

It seems clear that Jesus understood the anatomy of the relationship between his people and the Romans, and he interpreted the relationship against the background of the profoundest ethical insight of his own religious faith as he had found it in the heart of the prophets of Israel. The solution which Jesus found for himself and for Israel, as they faced the hostility of the Greco-Roman world, becomes the word and the work of redemption for all the cast down people in the every generation and in every age. I mean this quite literally. I do not ignore the theological and metaphysical interpretation of the Christian doctrine of salvation. But the underprivileged everywhere have long since abandoned any hope that this type of salvation deals with the crucial issues by which their days are turned into despair without consolation. The basic

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

fact is that Christianity as it was born in the mind of this Jewish thinker appears as a technique of survival for the oppressed. That it became, through the intervening years, a religion of the powerful and dominant, used sometimes as an instrument of oppression, must not tempt us into believing that it was thus in the mind and life of Jesus.³⁷

This researcher contends that whenever there is an injustice concerning a group of people, the whole nation suffers because of it. The nation of Israel is an excellent example. Thomas points out that "Inequitable distribution of power and resources, the perpetuation of social arrangements through violence and coercion, and the devaluing of human life warps and diminishes everyone who is caught up in it, hinders and breaks right relations among people, and violates God's creation and providence. In others words, oppression is a form of sin, producing long-range and large-scale alienation from God and from others. It is sin whose consequences are borne by others through social, economic, and cultural means that often seem intractable."³⁸

As a liberator, Jesus dealt with the sins of humankind. He led them from their oppressor by showing them a better way. Leadership in this context must model for those around them a better way of living by dealing with those who are oppressed by sin.

Jesus had many followers but he equipped the twelve disciples to turn the world upside down to institute change in a world that resisted change. Jesus taught followers about denying self and following him but the followers refused at times to follow Jesus. The twelve disciples were committed to following Jesus even though the crowd refused. The disciples validated that committed followers in spite of insufficiency can make a difference. On one occasion when the crowd walked away from Him, Jesus asked the

³⁷Ibid., 85.

³⁸Thomas and Wondra, 195.

disciples, "Will you also go away? Will the tides of popular opinion of the world make you go under? Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go?' You have the words of eternal life."³⁹ The twelve disciples were committed to following Jesus because He had the words of eternal life. The answer of Simon Peter, according to Johnson, "contains a great assumption, namely, that man must have someone to whom he may go. The souls of men are hungry, crushed, baffled, and perplexed, and cry out not for something but for someone. Men cannot live without a master, without a guide, without a revealer, a liberator, and a reconciler. Man is so constituted that he cannot live alone, cannot grope his own way except searching for the one who shall be his rest."⁴⁰ The words of Augustine says, "Thou hast made us for thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they find that rest which is in Thee."⁴¹ It is in God that leaders find their perfect peace and rest. The twelve disciples discovered that Jesus offered a reassuring peace and rest that the world could not give. The leadership in this context must rely on the sovereign hand of God to grant them the peace that they need for the journey to be great leaders.

Jesus taught and equipped the twelve concerning liberations. He sent them on missions of liberation throughout Israel. Leon Morris, in *New Testament Theology*, has suggested concerning the mission that:

Jesus specifically told his disciples not to go to the Gentiles or even to the Samaritans (Act 10:5); this mission was to 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (v.6). Some features of his charge seem to apply only to that mission, whereas others are of wider application. Be that as it may, on this occasion Jesus gave the

³⁹Johnson, 270.

⁴⁰Ibid., 271.

⁴¹Ibid.

disciples authority over demons and disease (10:1, 8). He sent them without material resources; God would look after them. The burden of their message was 'the kingdom of heaven has drawn near' (10:7). They went thus with the message of peace, and Jesus gave directions as to what their reactions should be when they were received peacefully and when they were not (10:11-15).⁴²

It appears that their mission of liberation was to the oppressed and marginalized. Jesus led the disciples to do greater work than He would do. The disciples fulfilled their mission in spite of the many obstacles that were before them. The leadership in this context must keep the mission before them in order to do a greater work for Christ. The mission gives leadership focus and clarity. Cornel West asserts that, "Quality leadership is neither the product of one great individual nor the results of odd historical accidents. Rather, it comes from deeply bred traditions and communities that shape and mold talented and gifted persons. Without a vibrant tradition of resistance passed on to new generations, there can be no nurturing of a collective and critical consciousness-only professional conscientiousness survives."⁴³

In conclusion, Jesus demonstrated a perfect model for liberation. Jesus started the ministry dealing with the forces that had God's people in oppression. His public ministries focused on those who were marginalized and who were considered the outcast. Jesus' whole message and life were about liberation and justice for all. It is apparent that the religion of Jesus is a clear response to the oppression and suffering of his people. Jesus had many followers but he taught and equipped the twelve to turn the world upside down to institute change in a world that resisted change and brought about liberation to

⁴²Leon Morris, *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986), 140.

⁴³Cornel West, *Race Matters* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2001), 56.

those who were marginalized. Jesus is a positive and effective leader for First Church to follower and model after because He is a leader among leaders.

Human Liberation

The Bible paints a picture of humanity being delivered from the hands of the oppressor. From the Exodus event to Jesus proclaiming the messages of liberation, it is about God liberating God's people. God is at the forefront leading men and women to bring about liberation for God's people. God uses whom God desires to bring about this process. In spite of their conditions and character, God chooses imperfect people to bring about God's perfect plan. This researcher will examine human liberation from three perspectives. The three perspectives are:

- (1) It is vital that one look at the Bible for motifs that will help aid in understanding the Bible and human liberation.
- (2) Leaders should consider the biblical hermeneutic concerning human liberation.
- (3) Human liberation is not for people of color only but persons who find themselves oppressed by a culture of oppressors.

It is vital that one look at the Bible for motifs that will help aid in understanding the Bible and human liberation. Latta R. Thomas in *Biblical Faith and the Black American* has suggested that the Bible is concerned for people from all occupations especially those who are oppressed and need liberation. According to J. Deotis Roberts, Thomas has set forth four biblical interpretations for evangelical and liberation motifs that will help aid in understanding the Bible and human liberation.

First, the Bible is a collective document that grew out of and is about God's liberation of people from human sin and oppression. Second, the Bible pictures the real God of heaven and earth and of Jesus Christ as always concentrating his liberating efforts and

concerns where human beings are in need. Third, before the Bible can be seen in all its liberating purity and power, effort must be made to identify and cut through those motives, myths, and interpretations, whether deliberate or accidental, which result in the attempts to twist the Bible in support of Black enslavement and White racism. Fourth, black people need the liberating power and direction available in the biblical faith as never before, and should fully embrace them.⁴⁴

Thomas sees the Bible as a means for the liberation of the oppressed people. The leaders in this context must have a deep appreciation of the Bible and its connection with liberation. The Bible is the final authority in the First Church. Therefore, leaders must know the word of God. Thomas sees the Bible as an important document to help liberate and inform those who are oppressed. Thomas understands the Bible to be a book of physical and spiritual liberation. His argument is that, "In reality the Bible, when allowed to come through without human tampering by people with shallow minds and evil motives, not only *does not* support human oppression, but also *urges human rebellion* against mistreatment of human beings as a matter of commitment to the God of heaven, earth and history.

The central theme of the New Testament is that God himself came to man's hopeless and helpless situation (incarnation) to lift human beings from the condition characterized by human sin and misery, even though Jesus, the Christ, began his work with the farthest down- the have-nots, the enslaved, the outcasts, the wounded, and the 'nobodies' of this world."⁴⁵ This researcher asserts that when leaders in the context connect with the God of the Bible, they can truly liberate others from their oppression. There must be a connection with God in order for liberation to take place.

⁴⁴Roberts, 48.

⁴⁵Ibid., 46.

In looking for human liberation, leaders should consider the biblical hermeneutics concerning liberation. Roberts points out that Thomas is similar to Cone. Thomas calls witness to the Moses of the Exodus and the author of Luke in support of his outlook on biblical interpretation. It is evident that Roberts, Thomas, and Cone adhere to similar biblical hermeneutics concerning human liberation. Roberts's stated,

Elsewhere I have discussed how the West African understanding of God was similar to the biblical God, especially regarding divine creation and providence. Black slaves brought from Africa to America a view of community that emphasized individual responsibility within community, the relation between human beings, and the relation between the living and the dead. Religion embraced all of life.⁴⁶

This researcher contends it is our religious experiences that we understand God and his plan for liberation in our lives. It is these experiences that church leaders are able to understand what people are going through and help them through the liberation process. Cone argues, "persuasively that there can be no true reconciliation between oppressed people and their oppressors without liberation of the oppressed. All talk about reconciliation without liberation only blesses injustice. But it is also true that there is no true liberation without reconciliation. True liberation means liberation also from the hostility and alienation that destroy humanity of both oppressed people and their oppressors."⁴⁷ This researcher asserts that when reconciliation takes place in the context, it opens the avenue for liberation for all. It is difficult for liberation to occur for everyone

⁴⁶Ibid., 47.

⁴⁷ Shirley C. Guthrie, *Christian Doctrine: Revised Edition* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 407.

when it is targeted for one group. Leaders must assert liberation for everyone, those that have and those that have not.

Human liberation is not just for people of color only but persons who find themselves oppressed by a culture of oppressors. Womanist theologians, Jacquelyn Grant and Delores Williams, stated that, "there is a 'liberating word' in the Bible, although at the same time they believe that the use of the Bible must be carefully constructed, since, in addition to serving liberation, the Bible has historically served as a tool of oppression against women and ethnic and sexual minorities."⁴⁸ Although there has been many strides in hermeneutics, the womanist theologians believe that there is still a touch of sexism by black male theologians in their interpretation.

Womanist theologians claimed that, "although black male theologians have readily identified the ways in which Euro-Americans have appropriated the Bible to suit their purposes in showing themselves to be racially and morally superior to blacks, these same male theologians have taken advantage of the way in which traditional Western theology promotes a belief in the inferiority of women. Despite the difficulties involved in appropriating the Bible for liberative causes, womanist agree with other Christian feminists that the Bible cannot simply be jettisoned by liberationists, because it has been and continues to form the foundation of daily faith and life of many Christian women."⁴⁹

Therefore, if liberation theology is going to be wholesome for the oppressed, it must address every arena of oppression. This researcher believes that the leadership in this context must look at avenues to bring about liberation to all people, regardless of sex,

⁴⁸Donald W. Musser & Joseph L. Price, *A New Handbook of Christian Theologians* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 515.

⁴⁹Ibid.

race or class. There are still persons in society that believe that God only uses certain people and genders. The church must be liberated from that by sound doctrine.

In addition to the womanist theologians feeling that there is still oppression brought on by their counter parts, Latin Americans have their concerns with oppression as well. It is important to note that the whole process of liberation theology came from Latin America. The movement was set in place for the poor of Latin America that they might assert their human dignity and their status as daughters and sons of God.

Gustavo Gutierrez asserts that” the breakthrough or irruption- as it has been called- of the poor in Latin America not only left its mark on the beginning of the theology of liberation but is daily becoming more urgent and massive, even where the effort is made to hide or repress it. This has simply reinforced the fact that the entrance of the poor onto center stage in Latin American society and the Latin American church has plowed new furrows for Christian life and reflection.”⁵⁰

This researcher believes that liberation is attainable for everyone. The poor and the outcast should be on the radar of church leaders in this context because they are usually those who are left behind.

In conclusion, liberation theology is a look at God working through the life of God’s Son and others to bring about liberation to the outcast, the overlooked and the oppressed. Over the last thirty years, James Evans and other theologians have moved black theology into a broader, multidimensional understanding of liberation. Evans has taken up the task of outlining the dimensions of liberation that are paramount in the fight against oppression. Although James Cone’s sociopolitical liberation has added physical,

⁵⁰Gustavo Gutierrez, *We Drink From Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of A People* (Mary knoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 1.

spiritual, and cultural understanding of liberation, it must be seen as one piece. Evans asserts that, “physical liberation refers to the innate desire of all human beings to enjoy freedom of movement and association and the rights of self-determination. Spiritual empowerment is that dimension of the liberation struggle in which African Americans come to understand and reclaim their intrinsic worth as human beings. Cultural liberation refers to freedom from negative self images, symbols, and stereotypes.”⁵¹

It is through these dimensions that leaders see liberation at work. This researcher asserts that leadership must grab hold to these dimensions to make a difference in the people that they serve. Cleophus J. LaRue is clear in pointing out that, “An overemphasis on any one of the three dimensions leads to an imbalance in the others. Consequently, Evans cautions against viewing the liberation motif as uni-dimensional. In its uni-dimensional extremes, it tends to be identified with sociopolitical justice at one end or a mere inward spiritual piety at the other.”⁵²

In order for true liberation to exist, it must exist for all people regardless of race, sex, or creed. There must be a balance in the entire dimension. In essence, human liberation is about a vital look at the Bible for motifs that will help aid in understanding the Bible and human liberation, leaders must consider the biblical hermeneutic concerning human liberation and it is for people of color only but persons who find themselves oppressed by a culture of oppressors.

⁵¹Cleophus J. LaRue, *The Heart of Black Preaching* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 118.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 119.

Biblical Foundation

The contemporary church is comprised of all kinds of leaders. There are leaders who assume that they are leaders just because they hold the title of a leader. They have been given the title pastor, deacon, trustee, president, chairman, etc. The sad fact is that many are unaware of the position that has been given them. If the contemporary church is to be relevant, it must take a serious look at the leadership of the church.

Leadership in the local church is different from other sectors in our society. The church is not an organization but an organism that lives and gives birth to help hurting humanity. Geoffrey V. Guns in *Spiritual Leadership: A Guide to Developing Spiritual Leaders in the Church* suggested, “the church is a spiritual organism, called into being by God to achieve the purposes of God in the world. Therefore, those who lead are called by God to fulfill God’s purpose and not their own agenda.”⁵³ This writer will look at leadership models from a biblical perspective from the Old and New Testament and how leaders dealt with the paradigm change.

Old Testament Model

There were many great leaders who lead Israel toward their purpose and plan that God had for them. This writer contends that Moses was one of the most important and significant leaders in the life of Israel. By examining Moses, it is in no way demeaning the significant of the other great patriarchs. They were all called to do a certain task for

⁵³Geoffrey V. Guns. *Spiritual Leadership: A Guide to Developing Spiritual Leaders in the Church* (Lithonia, GA: Orman Press, Inc., 2000), 45.

the people of God during a particular season. Moses was an ideal model for leadership and effective in leading change, especially for those in bondage, in the Old Testament.

Moses had leadership qualities and characteristics that made him an idea leader in the Old Testament. These include:

- (1) He was commission by God to lead God's people to a land flowing with milk and honey.
- (2) He was courageous to confront the many challenges of dealing with Pharaoh although he felt insufficient.
- (3) He was committed to God and offered hope in spite of the contention in the crowd.
- (4) He was confident that God would establish his leadership.

This research will explore each of these aspects that made Moses a unique and ideal leader in the Old Testament.

Moses was an ideal leader in the Old Testament because he was commissioned by God to lead God's people to a land flowing with milk and honey. Moses was the first to lead a congregation verse a single family in the Old Testament. He was to lead the children of Israel out of bondage after God hears their cry from oppression. Gutierrez points out that, "the Jewish people set out in quest of an encounter with God. But in a way this encounter was already a reality at the beginning of the journey. Even when the Israelites were still in Egypt, Yahweh expressed close and sympathetic awareness of their situation."⁵⁴ In chapter three of Exodus, the writer makes it clear that God is calling Moses to lead his people. It states,

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the

⁵⁴Gutierrez, 77.

LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up." When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."⁵⁵

Moses received his calling on the backside of the desert keeping Jethro's (his father-in-law) flock. Although Moses was highly educated and accustomed to the comfort of the palace, he was in a profession that was considered and held in low esteem. Herding sheep was not a highly sort after profession because it was for peasants. While herding the sheep, Moses had an encounter with the creator. It is vital that leaders have this encounter because of the obstacles that are before them. Moses turned to see, and then God spoke to him. Leroy Eims in *Be the Leader you were Meant to be: Biblical Principles of Leadership* has suggested that:

The first thing the Lord did was reveal Himself to Moses. Moses was certain that it was God who spoke to him (see vv.5-6). This is something that you must be sure about in your own mind. When someone comes to ask you to serve in one way or another, make certain that God is in it. Don't budge an inch in either direction-

⁵⁵Exodus 3:1-10

either yes or no- until you have determined the will of God in the matter.⁵⁶

It is through these encounters that leaders have the assurances that God is going to give what they need for the journey. All leaders need an encounter with God for liberating those around them. If more leaders had an encounter with God, it would make leading more effective. At the commissioning of Moses, God instructs him to take off his shoes as a sign of reverence. James M. Freeman in *Manners & Customs of the Bible* has suggested that, "Orientals are as careful to remove their shoes or sandals before entering a house, or a place of worship, as we remove our hats. Piles of shoes, slippers, or sandals, may be seen at the doors of Mohammedan mosques and of Indian pagodas; it is a mark of respect due to those places. Moses was in this way directed to show his reverence for the Divine Presence."⁵⁷

Moses shows his reverence to God by taking off his shoes. In accepting the call to leadership, one must have a reverence to God and the people of God. The matter of leadership should be weighed very carefully by persons before they take on leadership responsibilities and be certain that it is the will of God that you take on the responsibility. Eims points out that, "since God is concerned with what we do, God will make God's will known. God promises to do so. 'I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye'."⁵⁸

Moses was an ideal leader in the Old Testament because he was courageous to confront the challenges of dealing with Pharaoh although Moses felt

⁵⁶Leroy Eims, *Be the Leader you were Meant to be: Biblical Principles of Leadership* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1977), 9.

⁵⁷James M. Freeman, *Manners & Customs of the Bible* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1996), 61.

⁵⁸Eims, 9.

insufficient. On the one hand Pharaoh, according to J. David Pleins, “would not give up without a fight. Pharaoh’s actions as both a product of ignorance and fear, ignorance of the good the Joseph had done and fear that the Israelites, being so numerous, will join in a coalition against Egypt that would supply a formidable opposition to the empire’s hold on the region and the people therein.”⁵⁹

The people of Israel were under a major task master who was concerned about keeping them in bondage. In the midst of Israel being in bondage, God was calling Moses to be their liberator. When God present to Moses the challenges concerning His people, Moses did not feel qualified for the task that God had given him and cried with the question, “Who am I.” The question was so irrelevant that God did not address it. Eims points out, “therein lies one of the great secrets of leadership in the Christian enterprise. God said, ‘Certainly I will be with thee.’

What the Lord was trying to get across to Moses was a powerful truth. He as much as said, ‘Moses, it does not really matter who you are-whether you feel qualified or unqualified, whether you feel up to the task or not. The point is that I am going to be there. The statement I made to you still hold: I am come down to deliver them. I am going to do it, and I am going to give you the privilege of being in it with Me. You are My instrument of Deliverance.’”⁶⁰

Although Moses did not feel sufficient, God still picked him to lead his people. Guns point out, “Moses did not feel that he was born with the special gifts or recognizable talents. In fact when called to go to Egypt to tell Pharaoh to release Israel

⁵⁹J. David Pleins, *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 159.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 10.

from bondage, he pointed out his speaking handicaps. Then Moses said to the Lord, 'Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently, nor in time past, nor since Thou hast spoken to Thy servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.' He lacked self-confidence."⁶¹

This researcher contends that God is not looking for leaders who feel that they have it all together or sufficient, but leaders who look to him for guidance and direction. Moses yields to the call of God in spite of his insufficiency. He was courageous in confronting Pharaoh and telling him to let Gods people go. Pharaoh could have had him killed or imprisoned. Pharaoh was a brute and stubborn king. Michael Coogan in *The Oxford History of the Biblical World* has suggested that:

Moses reluctantly accepting his commission, Moses goes back to Egypt, and initiates a series of patterned confrontations with Pharaoh. In each, Moses pleads with Pharaoh to 'let my people go,' Pharaoh is obdurate, Moses dramatically performs a miracle that devastates the Egyptians, Pharaoh first relents and then recants. In this way, nine spectacular plagues descend on the Egyptians: bloody water, frogs, gnats, flies, pestilence, boils, hail, locusts, and darkness. The series culminates with the tenth and deadliest plague, in which all firstborn Egyptians, human and animal, die; this both leads into and explains the origin of the Passover ritual. At long last Pharaoh permits the Israelites to leave, only to change his mind one last time and send his army after Moses. But his Egyptian soldiers meet their death in the Red (Reed) Sea, whose waters miraculously part for the fleeing Israelites and then close over Pharaoh's doomed army.⁶²

This researcher contends that Moses was so courageous because he saw what God did in Egypt while he was before Pharaoh. God showed Moses and the children of Israel that God was going to be with them. It was a time of insurmountable direction and

⁶¹Guns, 54.

⁶²Michael D. Coogan ed., *The Oxford History of the Biblical World* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998), 59.

guidance for the children of Israel. Every courageous leader must believe that God is going to do something outstanding in their lives. This researcher asserts that God can do greater works in this context if leaders would believe in the power of God to move obstacles. Warren Wiersbe in *Expository Outlines on the Old Testament* points out that:

The plagues were actually a “declaration of war” against the gods of Egypt (see 12:12). The Nile River was worshiped as a god since it was their source of life (Deut. 11:10–12), and when Moses turned it into blood, God showed His power over the river. The goddess Heqt was pictured as a frog, the Egyptian symbol of resurrection. The plague of frogs certainly turned the people against Heqt! The lice and flies brought defilement to the people—a terrible blow, for Egyptians could not worship their gods unless they were the “cow-goddess” and Apis was the sacred bull. The gods and goddesses that controlled health and safety were attacked in the plagues of boils, hail, and locusts. The plague of darkness was the most serious, since Egypt worshiped the sun god, Ra, the chief of the gods. When the sun was blotted out for three days, it meant that Jehovah had conquered Ra. The final plague (the death of the firstborn) conquered Meskhemit the goddess of birth, and Hathor, her companion, both of whom were supposed to watch over the firstborn. All of these plagues made it clear that Jehovah was the true God!⁶³

God showed his enemies and his people that Israel God was supreme to the gods of Egypt. If leader are going to be successful, they have to follower the direction that God has outline for them to follower. They were victories because God gave them a leader who listens to the voice and follower the direction given by God. Moses was a courageous leader because he confronted the many challenges that were before him.

Moses was an ideal leader in the Old Testament because he was committed to God and offered hope in spite of the contention in the crowd. The first obstacle that Moses and the children of Israel had to contend with was being struck between a rock and a hard place. Terry Thomas claims that, “Their enclosed situation appeared to have been

⁶³Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), Ex 5:1.

insurmountable. Through that incident, Jonathan Kirsch claims that ‘Moses witnessed for the first time a characteristic of the Israelites that he would come to know with heartbreaking and sometimes maddening intimacy.’⁶⁴ In Exodus 14: 10-12 depict the emotion and contention that the children of Israel had in their hearts. It reads:

As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn’t we say to you in Egypt, ‘Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians’? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!”⁶⁵

The children of Israel became hopeless because they saw Pharaoh and his army approaching and fear filled the camp. They were trapped at the Red (Reed) Sea and know where to turn. Contention and unbelief filled the camp and the people turned on their leader. John F. Walvoord in the *Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* makes an interesting claim that:

The reaction of the Israelites here was much the same throughout the book (cf. 5:21) in times of duress and fright. Though they cried out to the LORD, they had no confidence He could help. Quickly forgetting the past, they bitterly accused Moses of deceiving them by leading them into the desert to die. . . . Didn’t we say . . . in Egypt, Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians? Moses, recognizing that fear was distorting their memories and arousing their passions against him, sought to reassure them that the LORD would deliver them by fighting for them (cf. 15:3; Neh. 4:20; Ps. 35:1) as they remained firm in confidence. Surprisingly, as they

⁶⁴Terry Thomas, *An Exploration into the Task of Leadership*, lecture notes from cluster group/ Handout. 43.

⁶⁵Exodus 14:10-12.

came to their greatest moment of deliverance, the people of God were full of distrust and fear.⁶⁶

This writer believes that Israel was an unstable group of people. When the hearts and minds of people are full of fear, it will cause a crisis every time. This researcher contends that it takes a strong leader to navigate through the rough edges of uncertainty. If leaders in this context are going to be effective, they must learn how to deal with contention and faithless people. They must remind people of the faithfulness of God.

This writer believes that Moses was at his best under pressure. He assures Israel to “fear not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.” How Moses handles the situation says something about his leadership skills and dependency upon God. Terry Thomas claims, “Moses response in this situation is crucial because the circumstances surrounding them were forcing the people to surrender their hope. This was their first real challenge toward their journey to the Promised Land. In spite of the circumstance, the leader must always be ready to offer hope.”⁶⁷ If the leaders in this context fail to give hope in hopeless situations, the people will become unstable and contentious.

Thomas points out that Martin Luther King’s, “Leadership style was alive among the masses. Dr. King once stated, ‘we must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope...Because when you lose hope you die ...Basic in our philosophy [of preaching] is a deep faith in the future...Ours is a movement based on hope.’ Dr.

⁶⁶John Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983), 131.

⁶⁷Thomas. 45.

King realized that hope is a sustaining element, not only in leadership, but in life. Hope motivates and inspires. It causes people to take action.”⁶⁸

It is through hope that leaders inspire the masses to move beyond their doubt and discontentment. It is a hope that inspires the masses to move in a positive and productive fashion. Terry Thomas has suggested that:

When the people we lead express statements of discontentment because of facing what appears to be insurmountable challenge, we must respond to them with a message of hope, an extreme confidence in God’s ability to handle the situation. I am aware that the Red Sea is before us and the mountains are all around us. I know that our men have no might against Pharaoh’s army. However, God is my light, my rock, my high tower, my salvation. Then whom shall we fear? We are instructed 1 Peter 3:15 “[to] sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.”⁶⁹

As Moses reassures the people concerning God’s divine protection, God parts the Red (Reed) Sea. God parts the sea in front of their enemies. In the midst of this, God established the leadership of Moses in the eyes of the people. God tell Moses in Exodus 14: 15-16, “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground.’”⁷⁰ This researcher asserts that it is through the voice of the leader that followers gain a sense of hope in the midst of their hopeless situations. The leader must speak out to affirm what direction God is leading them. Silence is not the answer to leader people.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Exodus 14:15-16

Moses was an idea leader in the Old Testament because he was confident that God would establish his leadership. It was after the first great event that God establish the leadership of Moses. The people gained a greater trust and respect for God and Moses their leader. In Exodus 14:31, "And when the Israelites saw the great power the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant."⁷¹

God allows situations to happen in the life of the church/individual to bring about a total surrender unto him. Israel had a great moment of discontentment and doubt about God and their leader but God turned their insurmountable challenges into a testimony for what God could do. Terry Thomas suggest that, "the manner in which a person respond to the initial statement of discontentment is a means in which a person's leadership begins to be established in the eyes of the people he or she has been appointed to lead.

Therefore, if the people you lead are expressing their statements of discontentment to you that perhaps is a sign of their endorsement of your leadership. It is an indication that they perceive that you, as their leader, have the ability to resolve their statement of discontentment."⁷² This researcher contends that whenever the leader in this context faces discontentment in the crowd, he/she should respond to them with a message of hope and confidence that God will make a way.

These experiences and characteristics that Moses exemplified as a leader in the Old Testament were some great ones for leaders to follow. He was an ideal leader in the Old Testament because he was commissioned from God to lead God's people to a land flowing with milk and honey, and courageous enough to confront Pharaoh even though

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Thomas, 46.

he felt insufficient. However, Moses was very effective as a leader because he was committed to God and offered hope to God's people in spite of the contention in the crowd. As a leader, he was confident that God would establish his leadership. This researcher asserts that Moses was an effective leader and leaders in the twenty first century should always be willing to model after such leadership because he brought about change in that particular paradigm.

New Testament Model

The discussion of leadership concerning the contemporary church must begin with Jesus Christ who stated that, "that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."⁷³ Therefore, the discussion of leadership in the contemporary church begins with its creator and maker, Jesus Christ. Charles A. Tidwell points out that, "while no single passage of Scripture offers a comprehensive concept comparable to the Jethro Moses model, a study of the total approach of Jesus in relation to His apostles shows Him clearly in the roles preparing them to minister. He furnished them the essentials for performing ministry. He equipped them to do 'greater things that I am doing.'"⁷⁴ This researcher contends that it is through the equipping of leaders to lead others that the context becomes stronger in what God is calling them to do.

Guns explored an excellent biblical model concerning the leadership of Jesus. He points out that the leadership of Jesus can be seen in His mission and model before the

⁷³Matthew 16:18

⁷⁴Charles A. Tidwell, *Church Administration: Effective Leadership for Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Boardman Press, 1985), 41.

people. Jesus achieved his mission by preaching, teaching, healing, and giving of Himself. This researcher will explore each of these principles that Jesus exemplified as a leader.

Jesus preached about the kingdom of God. Stephen Harris in *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction* points out that Jesus attempted to convey his vision of God's kingdom and how it would impact the world.⁷⁵ The English phrase "kingdom of God" translates the Greek expression *basileia tou theou*. *Basileia* refers primarily to the act or process of ruling, a quality or privilege that distinguishes a king or other ruler. It is to process control, freedom, and independence. Jesus showed his control, freedom, and independences through his preaching. According to Harris, "the biblical God whose infinite kingship Israel's thinkers take for granted has these attributes in abundance."⁷⁶

Jesus is pictured using *basileia tou theou* in four major ways: (1) to express the kingdom preeminence; (2) to defend his personal authority to represent the kingdom and interpret the divine will; (3) to imply the nature of his self-awareness- the view he holds about his relationship with God and the meaning of kingship; (4) to proclaim the kingdom's radical demand for total commitment.⁷⁷

Though out the Synoptic Gospel, the kingdom of God appears to dominate the message of Jesus. For example, in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew presents Jesus giving high priority to the kingdom of God. The disciple who put God's kingdom and his righteousness first will receive an abundance of blessing (Matt. 6:33). This writer

⁷⁵Stephen L. Harris. *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction 3rd ed.* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1999), 227.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid.

believes that the black church thrives on good preaching. Preaching that is transformative will focus on the kingdom of God. If Jesus preached about the kingdom of God, it is the task of the preacher to preach the message that Jesus preached. This researcher contends that this context must rally around the preaching hour because it is what changes lives and offers hope.

Jesus achieved his mission by teaching. In the four gospels, Jesus was recognized as someone who taught with great authority. “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them. Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and the region across the Jordan followed him”(Matthew 4:23-25).⁷⁸

Jesus allowed his teaching to impact the masses verse the masses impacting him. His teaching helped the masses to discover their purpose and plan for their lives. This researcher asserts that leaders need to be taught. It is impossible to teach what you don't know and lead where you don't go. According to Matthew 5-7, Jesus was teaching about the beatitudes and “the crowd was amazed at his teaching” (7:28). In Matthew 7:29, “he was one who taught with authority.” In the gospel of Luke, Jesus did a lot of teaching and healing (16:16-18, 6:17-19, 14:7-14) to name a few. In the gospel according to Mark, Jesus arrives in home town teaching in the synagogue (6:1).

⁷⁸ Matthew 4:23-25.

Terry Thomas in his book, *Becoming a Fruit-Bearing Disciple*, asserts that "Jesus disciples did not focus on learning his words, but they focused on learning his lifestyle. Alyce M. McKenzie says in her book, *Hear and Be wise Becoming a Preacher and Teacher of Wisdom*, that to be disciples of Jesus one must listen to his words and also observe his life."⁷⁹ In watching Jesus, heal the sick, raise the dead, pray, worship, teach, cast out demons and endure suffering, his followers learned a lot by just watching Jesus.

This researcher contends that if the church is going to develop leaders, they must follow the teaching examples of Jesus as well as His lifestyle. Leadership must be concerned about the teaching ministry of the church, its practices and set out to live a life that is worth following.

Guns points out that there must be two levels in the teaching ministry of the church.

First, we must be concerned about what is taught. Does what we teach enrich and increase spiritual growth and ministry effectiveness? What is taught in church or in training sessions must make a real difference in the lives of people and in the life of the church. Second, we must be concerned about who is teaching. What is the level of knowledge, personal character and public reputation of the teacher? The ministry of teaching is a spiritual gift given to the church for the purpose of building up the church for work of ministry (see Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29; Ephesians 4:11; 1 John 3:1).⁸⁰

Jesus lived a life that matters. His teaching was followed by His life style. He was a man given too much prayer and devotion to God. If the church leaders are going to be relevant in this century, it needs a strong emphasis on teaching and living a life that matters. It is through teaching that we equip the saints for ministry. Jesus stated in the

⁷⁹Terry Thomas, *Becoming a Fruit-Bearing Disciple* (Raleigh, NC: Voice of Rehoboth, 2005), 68.

⁸⁰Guns, 48.

great commission, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."⁸¹

The importance of teaching will help the believer to understand the commands that Jesus has left for us to do. If you can teach them, this writer believes, then you can lead them. Leaders in this context must be present and alert when an opportunity is presented to them to learn from a teaching moment about their responsibilities as a leader.

Jesus achieved his mission by healing. During Jesus' earthly ministry, the world was full of people who needed healing from their brokenness and Jesus met their needs. William R. Herzog II in *Prophet and Teacher: An Introduction to the Historical Jesus* points that "Jesus was a traditional healer who was interested in healing both illness and disease.

Disease refers to what is physically wrong with a person (e.g., leprosy) while illness refers to the social consequences of the disease (e.g., isolation, being cut off from friends and family). This explains why Jesus' exorcisms and healing so often lead to the restoration of those who have been healed."⁸² This researcher asserts that the healing of the mind is also a part of healing. The mind is at peace once it has been taught. Paul said, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living

⁸¹Matthew 28:18-20

⁸²William R. Herzog II. *Prophet and Teacher: An Introduction to the Historical Jesus* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 87.

sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual ^a act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. ⁸³

This researcher contends that the minds of the leaders have to be transformed in order for them to bring about transformation in the lives of others. They can be transformed by renewing it every day in God's word. The leadership in this context must receive healing of mind, body and soul. There are many miracles that Jesus did to help the hurting and the disenfranchised at leaders must keep in mind. For example in Mark 5:1-6 it states:

They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!" For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!" Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and

⁸³*New International Version*, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), Ro 12:1-2.

were drowned. Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well.⁸⁴

It is clear in these verses that Jesus mission was to heal those who where disenfranchised. The man in the text needed the healing and delivering hand from Jesus and he granted unto him. According to Herzog, "The healing vouches for Jesus as a reliable and powerful broker of Yahweh's forgiveness of sin and cancellation of debt..., Jesus is no longer just a disputant. He is a force to be reckoned with, a shamanistic figure and broker who mediates power. He is a public, political presence who cannot be ignored or snubbed in the hope that he will wither and go away.

The healing is, therefore, a necessary part of the incident, not just an add-on, but how Jesus healed and just exactly what the man's malady was can no longer be known."⁸⁵ If the church of today would follow the examples of Jesus healing, we would have more healing of mind, body, and soul.

This researcher asserts that leaders in this context must equip others to the knowledge of Christ's amazing power. Leadership can reference other passages where Christ shows his healing power, such as (Mark 5:35-42; John 11:38-44; Matthew 4:23-25). The model that He set forth is a good example of leadership in a socio-evangelical ministry. It is this researcher belief that leadership must address the healing aspects of Jesus to a hurting world because for we are all wounded healers.

⁸⁴Mark 5:1-16

⁸⁵Herzog, 87.

Christ was successful in mission because he was a servant. As a leader, he was a perfect model for all to follow. Christ taught his disciples what true greatness was all about. Terry Thomas points out, "Jesus used the description of a servant to identify himself to his disciples. Perhaps the most descriptive identification of a disciple of Jesus is that of being a servant. Jesus even encouraged and admonished his disciples to aspire to become a servant."⁸⁶

Mark's gospel points out that:

They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the road?' But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest. Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.' He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, 'Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.'⁸⁷

Christ lessons on greatness teaches us that the one "who is the greatest is the servant." It is this researcher belief that there must be more servants in this context. Servants that have a mind like Christ, mind that is concerned for the young and the old. Guns points out that Robert K. Greenleaf's ideas about servant leadership which came from reading Hermann Hesse's *Journey to the East* is a good example of servant leadership. He wrote that:

In this story, we see a band of men on a mythical journey, probably also Hesse's own journey. The central figure of the story is Leo, who accompanies the party as the servant who does their menial chores, but who also sustains them with his spirit and his song. He is a person of extraordinary presence. All goes well until Leo disappears. The group falls into disarray and the journey is abandoned. They cannot make it without the servant Leo. The

⁸⁶Thomas, 81.

⁸⁷Mark 9:33-37

narrator, one of the parties, after some years of wandering, finds that Leo is taken into the order that had sponsored the journey. There he discovers that Leo, whom he had known first as servant, was in fact the titular head of the Order, its guiding spirit, a great and noble leader.⁸⁸

This researcher asserts that in order for us to be great leaders we have to be servants first not self serving. Jesus was a servant leader. He took on the menial tasks and stoops to do the jobs that no one else would do. Greenleaf remarked, "The great leader is seen as servant first, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness."⁸⁹ A great example of the servant spirit that Jesus presented to His followers can be seen in John 13:4-17 during the Passover. Prior to Him being crucified, Jesus washes their feet. He uses that as a teaching moment for the disciples to understand that washing each other's feet is a sign of great humility. Guns points out that:

The point of the washing was two-fold. First, Jesus wanted to demonstrate to His disciples what it meant to be a servant. Definitions are fine, but living examples are clearer. Second, when Jesus washed their feet, it was a symbol of spiritual cleaning. Every leader within the church must examine their spirituality. Am I doing the things necessary to develop and maintain a committed and close relationship with the Lord? If you and I expect to be Christ like leaders, we must possess a spirit of humility and service.⁹⁰

It is interesting to note that washing of the feet was also vital in that custom. The feet were the most disgusting part of the body because it was in contact with all elements.

Terry Thomas points out that:

In spite of that, Jesus humbled himself and became a servant to his disciples. Washing feet was not Jesus' responsibility. Jesus was teacher and master. In principle... the rabbis' students were to learn

⁸⁸Guns, 53.

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Ibid., 54.

the torah, not only from the teaching of the master, but also from daily contact with him. Concretely, daily contact meant that they waited on their master as his personal servants. The rule was that the knowledge of the Torah could not be gained without service to the experts.⁹¹

It is this researchers belief that servant hood is the hallmark of a great servant. It is when leaders serve those whom God has sent them. This context must focus on how it can become greater servants for Christ. If leadership would focus on servant hood, it would bring about a everlasting change in the context.

In conclusion, Jesus was an idea leader in the New Testament because He showed forth his leadership skill by developing the mission through preaching, teaching, healing and being a model servant. He is the perfect model for the New Testament church to follower. Terry Thomas in *an Exploration into the Task of Leadership* is correct when he states, "leadership is needed in the church because of needs that are yet to be met. The church needs person who can envision how unmet needs can be met, the tenacity to make it a reality and the foresight of needs that will develop in the future, subsequently having the church ready to meet those needs when they arise."⁹² This writer believes that these needs can be met through strong leadership and the power of Him who has sent us.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Historically church fathers have seen the need for leadership in the church. According to Lovett H. Weems, Jr., "From its beginning the church has recognized the need for some person to be set apart for leadership of the community. The church father Jerome put it, 'there can be no church community without a leader or team of leaders.'

⁹¹Thomas, 82.

⁹²Ibid., 2.

Theologian Annie Janbert reminds us that in the earliest Christian communities leadership was seen as ‘the responsibility of all and the charge of some.’”⁹³

Strong leadership has been the key to developing and maintaining a healthy church. In the midst of this, church leaders have seen the need to develop and evaluate their leadership skills and abilities as they lead others. Hippolytus of Rome (A.D. 170-236), according to Gerald L. Sittser author of *Water from a Deep Well*, “wrote *On the Apostolic Tradition* in A.D. 215 to provide a manual that instructed bishops and presbyters about how to teach new believers the essential of the faith. The period of instruction lasted up to three years. Amazingly, most of the church fathers - Origen, John Chrysostom, Augustine of Hippo, Theophilus of Jerusalem, for example—taught those classes, demonstrating that instruction of new believers was so important that only the best-trained pastors were qualified to take on the responsibility.”⁹⁴

Training has been an ongoing process. This researcher asserts that leadership has to realize that if they are going to be effective they must prepare themselves for the leadership. The time has passed when assuming you know and don’t know is gone. The pews are crying out for leadership. There are new paradigms and ideas that have been brought on by a changing world. David A. Ramey asserts,

The quest for lifelong learning is integral to the process of developing leaders. Leaders are measured not in the knowledge or expertise they possess, but in their capacity to learn from the unknown, the unexpected, and the unexplored. The task of leadership requires the courage of conviction to venture beyond our comfort zone of existing knowledge and experience to discover new and alternative ways of thinking, acting, and behaving to lift

⁹³Lovett H. Weems, Jr. *Church Leadership: Vision, Team, Culture, and Integrity* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press: 1993), 27.

⁹⁴Gerald L. Sittser, *Water from a Deep Well* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press: 2007), 66.

our organization and ourselves to greater levels of accomplishment.⁹⁵

It is this writer's belief that leadership training is the key to an effective organization. Terry Thomas gives an excellent definition concerning leadership when he states that leadership is, "mobilizing people to move from a state beneath their God given potentiality while guiding them to a position of promise and possibility whereby their potentiality can be actualized. This position of promise and possibility, I might add, is a place designated by God. In other words, pastoral/laity leadership or Christian leadership is guiding a congregation or individual to their Promised Land."⁹⁶ It is imperative that leaders see the potential in the people that they lead.

This researcher believes that the potential to see the greatness in people and cultivate that greatness is leadership. A good example is the desert saint, Antony of Egypt. St. Antony was known as one who would cultivate persons for the ministry. Sittser points out, "he became an adviser to hundreds who hoped to achieve the spiritual depth he exhibited, whom he exhorted to die daily, discard their possessions and prepare themselves for the Day of Judgment."⁹⁷

The leadership in this context must see in people greatness even thou they don't see it. Leaders must equip others for greatness for greatness to come forth. Terry Thomas asserts that, "a leader must see the possibilities that lie within the people they lead. Wayne Cordeiro says that when he looks at the forest he see more than trees. He sees houses, beautiful dressers, rocking chairs, bed frames, cabinets and desks! They're all in

⁹⁵David A. Ramey, *Empowering the Leaders* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1991), 94.

⁹⁶Thomas, 38.

⁹⁷Sittser, 77.

the forest, and they are beautiful!.”⁹⁸ It is Cordeiro believe that we must view the people that we lead in same manner. It is also Cordeiro position that we see the potential and possibilities in the people we lead. He explained:

No, you won't find them already completed. But the potential is all there. Sure, you'll still have to cut and sand and varnish the wood, but it's all there. Everything you need to furnish your entire home is in that forest. You just need to see more than trees in order to be motivated to harvest the wood. You have to see their potential! You gotta believe that there's gold in the hills if you're gonna muster up the energy you need to mine it out.⁹⁹

Historically, leadership training was important for leaders to developed and maintained a level of training to keep leaders on task and relevant in their particular context. This researcher will explore this by explaining leadership historically by examining:

- (1) How biblical leaders used effective administrative skills to bring about change.
- (2) How post biblical leaders equipped others to lead.

Effective Administrative Skills

Historically in developing leadership, there has been a need in equipping the leaders for administrative skills so that they can become more effective. Strong administrative skills have been one of the components in developing strong leaders. Charles A. Tidwell points out that, “church leaders need to discover, accept, and develop an administrative style of leadership. The need is not a new one. Neither is the approach

⁹⁸Ibid., 38.

⁹⁹Ibid.

to the remedy. Both are apparent in history at least as far back as the Exodus.”¹⁰⁰ Moses is a perfect example and will be discussed later in the paper. However, leaders must keep in mind that it is impossible for one leader to carry the load for everyone. History shows that leaders must surround themselves with people in whom they can equip for the ministry.

This researcher contends that equipping leaders to lead others in an excellent model to follower because the burden of leadership is not on one person. However, leaders must sharpen their administrative skills as they are equipped to do ministry. When leaders are equipped in the ministry, they can help the ministry to strive and face the many challenges before it. There must be an active equipping ministry in this context to bring about effective change. Joe Ellis in the *Church on Purpose* points out that, “Elton Trueblood was among the first to raise the current emphasis on the idea of an equipping ministry.

He describes the congregation as a team in which every member is responsible for helping attain the goal. The minister functions as a player-coach, whose job it is to train and lead the team to victory-not a sideline coach, but a playing coach right alongside all the other team members.”¹⁰¹ It is imperative that the leader places more emphasis on people than things. This researcher believes that when the emphasis is on things it breaks down the communication that would bring about effectiveness. It is strangely enough to realize that many church leaders don’t communicate and relate well with people. Tidwell points out that, “studies by seminary curriculum committees and others continue to show

¹⁰⁰Tidwell, 17.

¹⁰¹Joe S. Ellis, *The Church On Purpose: Key to Effective Church Leadership* (Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing. 1982), 56.

that the biggest problem area for church leaders, specifically ministers, is their inability to relate satisfactorily and effectively to people.”¹⁰²

In leading people, this researcher contends that the church leaders must develop his or her administrative skills in working with people. In order to equip them, leaders must learn how to be in relationship with them and communicate with them effectively in order to lead them. Ellis asserts, “equipping is a dynamic, purpose-oriented concept. It means, ‘furnishing or preparing someone for service or action.’”¹⁰³ The equipping ministry concept aligns the focus and purpose of the ministry. Ellis asserts that, “the equipping concept adjusts the focus of ministry. A minister who seeks to equip his people for service is not merely a Chaplain who renders service to his clients. He works to enable other Christians to achieve God’s purposes.”¹⁰⁴ The equipping ministry has been a vital part of all successful ministries. For an example Sittser point out, “

By the middle of the second century, pastors were already following an established liturgy of worship. On Sunday they called believers together for worship, which was usually held in large homes. They read from the memoirs of the apostles, preached a sermon and led the church in singing and corporate prayers. Then they distributed the bread and wine to the faithful. They also collected funds and appointed deacons to distribute those funds and thus provided ‘for the orphans and widows, those who are in need on account of sickness or some other cause, those who are in bonds, strangers who are sojourning.’ The deacons became the protector of all who are in needed.¹⁰⁵

Historically, it has been the equipping of others that has made the difference. The historical leadership models of Jethro- Moses and Jesus are excellent biblical models on

¹⁰²Tidwell, 35.

¹⁰³Ellis, 56.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵Sittser, 66.

how they equipped other to do the work of the ministry. This researcher would like to explain each of these models historically and how they equipped leaders to lead others.

Jethro-Moses Leadership Model

There are several biblical models that we can learn from regarding the equipping ministry concept. Each one of the models has a unique concept toward good church administration. However, the Jethro-Moses Model is an excellent example of how Jethro shared with Moses how to equip the children of Israel so that their individual needs could be met. It was collaboration of leadership, a process of connections and systems. This was helpful because Moses was trying to handle each situation himself. Jethro boldly told him what he was doing was not good for the people. Tidwell stated that Jethro give him a prescription for equipping ministry. Jethro asked that God presence would be with Moses and the authoritative command of God persuaded Moses to listen to the voice of his father-in-law. Tidwell asserts that these as the major points of the prescription for collaboration of leadership, a process of connections and systems.

This researcher would like to examine the nine processes of connections and systems. They are: pray for them, teach them the guidelines, show them the way, show them the work, organize the people into manageable groups, choose qualified men to lead each group, give the chosen leaders continuing authority, have leaders decide routine matters and bring great matters to the chief leader. These are major components in equipping leadership.

1. *Pray for them*- Moses was to seek God's face for the people. He was to bring their problems before God that God could heal them and deliver them.

2. *Teach them the guidelines-* He was to teach them the statutes and the laws. These were to be the guidelines, as policies, procedures, and rules.
3. *Show them the way-* He was to show them how they could live their lives. He was their spiritual counselor. Since God used a pillar of cloud and fire for their physical direction, this admonition must refer to Moses showing them life direction.
4. *Show them the work-* Moses was to show the people the work that God had ordain for them to do. This work was a part of the redemptive purposes that God had outline. It was Gods way of challenging them to do a great work. It was to provide much of the motivation for their struggle to become the kind of instrument as a people through whom God could work.
5. *Organize the people into manageable groups-* Moses was to organize the people into groups so that they could be managed. He was to have the group of thousands, which in turn, would have groups of hundreds. The groups were the sub-grouped into fifties, and the fifties into groups of ten. He developed an organization plan so that every person needs could be met.
6. *Choose qualified men to lead each group-* Moses was to see that qualified men were provided "out of all the people" to be placed over each unit of the organization suggested. The "job qualification" are impressive. These leaders were to be able, God fearing, truthful, haters of unjust gain. Their span of leadership was reasonable- each man could be expected to cover his assignment effectively.
7. *Give the chosen leaders continuing authority-* Moses was to let the chosen leaders of the group judge the people at all seasons. Their authority was not limited to any season. No one would benefit by waiting for a different season for his arbitration to be handled. This arrangement would expedite the solving of disputes and avoid a loaded docket. It would be an exception to the statutes and laws which would not be decided by these judges. This pinpointed responsibility both for the people and for their leaders.
8. *Have leaders decide routine matters-* Moses was to have the chosen judges to decide on the small matters and the larger matter where to be brought to him. The matters in which they solved where covered by statutes and laws or which were of limited magnitude. These kinds of problem were to be solved on the lowest possible level of the organization structure- at the point

nearest the problem itself- where the facts of the issues were most readily apparent.

9. *Bring "great matters" to the chief leader-* The great matters were to be brought to Moses so that he could handle them. These were matters that were not satisfactorily dealt with under the statutes and the laws. Moses was to judge the exception that was not covered. He was to manage by exception, a management concept which has been articulated in this century by some as though they invented it.¹⁰⁶

The wisdom that Jethro shared with Moses was insightful and beneficial to the children of Israel. It strengthened the organization of the ministry. This researcher would assert that the plan helped the burden to be placed on everybody. It is important that this context focus on the equipping of others, so that the responsibilities of dealing with small issues are not placed on the chief leader. Too many responsibilities will overwhelm the chief leader (Pastor). The Jethro-Moses model, according to Tidwell, "would be easy to point out some untimely aspects of the Jethro-Moses in applying it to democratic leadership in a church. The times have afforded some changes in situational factors which would make some of the model unsuited to the church. But a model does not have to be a perfect model in order to be instructive."¹⁰⁷

The model that Jethro shared with Moses could be used to bring about suitable change and organization. This researcher asserts that it shows leadership how to develop a collaboration of leadership, a process of connections and systems by taking the load off of the chief leader and allowing leadership to be shared by those around the leader. It is a unique paradigm for the 21st century to follow. If this context is going to be effective in the 21st century, it must reexamine the way it does ministry.

¹⁰⁶Tidwell, 39-40.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 41.

Jesus' Leadership Model

The model that Jesus used to equip the disciples for ministry is also an excellent model to examine. It is paramount that leaders look at some of the fundamental components that Jesus shared and exemplified with His followers. This researcher would like to examine four aspects that Jesus modeled for equipping the disciples as leaders.

The four aspects are:

- (1) He spent most of His time with the disciples verse religious leaders.
- (2) He spent a great deal of time training and equipping the disciples to equip others for ministry.
- (3) He trained and showed them how to be effective servants to the people.
- (4) The servant model the He used gave the disciple the tools to turn the world upside down.

Jesus spent most of his time with the disciples verse the religious leaders. Tidwell points out that the approach that Jesus used was very effective. He stated that William Hull gives the results and approach of Jesus by saying:

When Jesus launched his ministry, he bypassed the religious professionals of his day, who lacked the training of the rabbis or the prestige of the priesthood, he said, "You are the salt of the earth, the light of the world"(see Matt. 5:13-16). It is astonishing how they became the pivot on which hung the very survival of his movement. It is not an exaggeration to say that when Jesus died he left only two things on earth-the blood split in loving sacrifice for others and the impact of his life upon a handful of frightened, faltering men. The fact that they were open to the reality of his resurrection, that they were willing to overcome provincialism in carrying out a worldwide mission is testimony to the wisdom of the basic strategy Jesus followed.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 42.

The equipping strategy of Jesus was so profound that it led to a massive growth in the church. This researcher asserts that the leadership of this context must spend time developing so that they may be able reach the masses. The twelve caught on to the concept very well and used it as an instrument to spread from being a tiny remnant with Judaism to become a worldwide faith. Hull asserts that, "...if the twelve had viewed themselves as the only legitimate ministers, they would soon have been overwhelmed as the group they led grew from 120 to three thousand at Pentecost. In fact, one might add that they very nearly were overwhelmed as the church grew, saved only by their administrative move to lead the church to choose others to share the work load with them."¹⁰⁹

When Jesus equipped the disciples, he gave them the necessary tools to do a great work for the kingdom. This writer asserts that if leadership in this context uses their tools effectively, they can change any given situation.

Jesus spent a great deal of time training and equipping the disciples to equip others for the ministry. He said in the great commission, "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."¹¹⁰

Making disciples was a part of equipping them. Jesus commanded his disciples to teach others what He had taught them. This researcher believes that leadership should

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Matthew 28:16-20.

make other disciples for the kingdom. Leaders should be equipped and then equip others. Historically discipleship has been integral part of leadership development. Cartmill and Gentile in their book *Leadership Essentials* points out that, "Leadership skills are essential, but we are first called to be instruments of God who are guiding others toward spiritual growth and maturity.

Not all disciples will be called into leadership roles, but let's be sure those who are leaders are grounded in the faith, building their leadership and ministry on the foundation of a growing relationship with God. In this way, we can better ensure the effectiveness of ministry, the self-care and development of the leader, and the care of those influenced by the leader."¹¹¹

It is this writer's belief that discipleship training is a key component in developing the leadership of this church. This researcher asserts that when leadership in this context recognizes the importance and implement discipleship training into their daily lives, it will make a profound impact on those in whom they lead. As Jesus taught his followers, according to Tom Sine, discipleship was a call to be counter-cultural.¹¹² Sine goes on to say that, "In fact, if anything, his call to his disciples to be radically counter to the prevailing culture was dramatically pronounced. Jesus called his followers then as now not only to commit themselves to God and follow the way but also to transform radically their fundamental values and life priorities and commit themselves to be fulltime agents of the kingdom."¹¹³

¹¹¹Carol Cartmill and Yvonne Gentile, *Leadership Essentials* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2006), 13.

¹¹²Tom Sine, *Taking Discipleship Seriously: a Radical Biblical Approach* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1985), 19.

¹¹³Ibid.

The training of leadership has been the key component for success in any organization. John Maxwell pointed out that, “leadership is developed daily, not in a day. That is the reality dictated by the Law of Process. Benjamin Disraeli asserted, ‘the secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his time when it comes’”¹¹⁴ If leaders are going to be effective, they must be discipleship training. This researcher believes that if leadership in this context takes discipleship training to heart, it can move the hearts of the people. Training should be at the top of every leader’s agenda.

Jesus trained and showed the disciples how to be effective servants to the people. In training the disciples on servant hood, Jesus would compare effective leadership and non-effective leadership. In Matthew 20:25-28, He compares the two by saying, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord over them and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”¹¹⁵

The custom was for their leaders to exercise authority down upon those under them. It was an authoritarian relationship between the leader and the follower. The researcher believes that this type of leadership can cause more problems than solutions. This context must drop the ideology that leaders are superior to the followers. This can be seen in the way leaders treat their others, especially the new comers. In teaching His disciples, James and John assumed that Jesus’ kingdom would have such an authority

¹¹⁴John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 27.

¹¹⁵Matthew 20:25-29.

system and wanted to be in charge. These disciples did not grasp His kingdom agenda and the nature of leadership. Terry Thomas has suggested that “the highest aspiration of a disciple is to seek to become a servant to others.

The ministry of a disciple of Jesus is not about status. It is not about setting at the head table. It is about serving others.”¹¹⁶ Jesus set forth a new paradigm for leadership. Ellis observation is similar to Thomas because he said that, “Jesus sets forth a relationship between leader and people in which servant-leadership is to prevail. The role is not one of authority but of service.”¹¹⁷

The servant leader model for leadership is to focus on the follower not the leader. Ellis goes on to say that, “Jesus discards once and for all secular ruler model for His people and replaces it with a relationship that He himself first exemplified. Such a leader is a facilitator-enabler-equipper; his role is that of helping the body of people become functional in achieving their purposes.”¹¹⁸

This writer asserts that leadership must be about enabling others to develop and find their purpose; in this context, leadership has be absent.

The servant model that Jesus exemplified gave the disciples the tools that they need to turn the world upside down. The servant leader, according to Ellis, “helps the body of people perceives their goals, develop commitment to them, mobilize to reach them, and pursue their achievement. He offers guidance, inspiration, instruction, and resources; but he strives to work in cooperation with the group as a team.”¹¹⁹ The servant-

¹¹⁶Thomas, 82.

¹¹⁷Ellis, 130.

¹¹⁸Ibid., 131.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

leader model that Jesus exemplified helped the disciples to make more disciples and turn the world upside down.

This researcher believes that First Church can turn this community upside down if they would follow the model in which Jesus exemplified. He called them to be fishers of men. Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges in the *Servant Leader* asserts that striving to be a servant leader, “you must elevate the growth and development of people from a ‘means’ goal to an ‘end’ goal of equal importance to the product or service mission of the organization. Servant Leadership requires a level of intimacy with the needs and aspirations of the people being led that might be beyond the level of intimacy an ego-driven leader is willing to sustain.”¹²⁰

Blanchard and Hodges go on to say that, “servant leadership begins with a clear and compelling vision of the future that excites passion in the leader and commitment in those who follow. In practical terms a good vision has three parts; your purpose/mission: What business you are in—How will you benefit your customers?, Your preferred picture of the future: Where you are going—what will you look like if everything is running as planned?, Your values: How you want people to behave when they are working on your mission and picture of the future. What do you stand for?”¹²¹ Jesus exemplified these characteristic before his disciples so that they could be fishers of men. The writer asserts that if this context would see beyond the church walls and see the great harvest that God has laid before it, it can become a greater church.

¹²⁰ Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *the Servant Leader* (Nashville, TN: J. Countryman, 2003), 58.

¹²¹ *Ibid*, 45.

The leadership must have the purpose, picture and vision of the future, this happen when leaders hung around Jesus. The disciples hung around Jesus and his characteristics rubbed off on them. Terry Thomas asserts that,

It is a known fact that if you hang around a person long enough you will find yourself unknowingly mimicking that person's behavior. Without thought or practice, our behavior begins to reflect the person or persons with whom we constantly share our time. Jessie Jackson claims that if you tell him who your friends are, he will be able to tell you what you are like.¹²²

This researcher asserts that if leadership builds a relationship with Christ, they too can turn the world upside down and make a difference in the world in which we live. It is Jesus nature to change people who come into contact with him.

Although Jesus modeled the servant leader model, many of the early followers viewed him differently. Michael Coogan points out that, "Considering the number of messianic views prevalent in the first-century Jewish culture, Jesus would have evoked a variety of responses, even from those who knew him. Some saw him as a political figure who would liberate the land from the Romans; some perhaps saw him as a priest who would restore the Temple; some saw him as a prophet and others as a sage; still others saw him as the promised return of Elijah or the new Moses. Some first-century Jews may well have regarded Jesus as a divine figure (for example, Wisdom incarnate), others as a human being divinely anointed."¹²³

The servant leader model that Jesus exemplified was an excellent example for church leaders to follow in spite of what other religious views thought. This model

¹²²Thomas, 78.

¹²³Coogan, 374.

shows leaders how Jesus equipped the twelve for effective and relevant ministry doing that time. This researcher believes that it can make a difference in this context.

The leadership model that Jesus exemplified is a great model for the 21st century leaders to follow. It is a unique paradigm for leaders to follow if they desire to bring about relevant change. In observation, Jesus spent most of His time with the disciples versus the religious leaders and used a great deal of that time training and equipping them to equip others. Jesus showed them how to be effective servant leaders to the people by being a servant leader himself which in turn gave the disciples the tools that they needed to turn the world upside down. These are the fundamental tools one needs to equip others to do relevant ministry in the 21st century.

Post- Biblical Leaders Equipping Others

The equipping of church leaders has been the bed rock of the Christian church. The Christian church has been able to withstand the heretics and pagan culture that surround its doors because of strong leadership. The post biblical church leaders like Origen, Augustine of Hippo, Martin Luther and Martin Luther King Jr. to name a few, were instrumental in equipping others to defend their faith and prepare for the Christian ministry.

Origen was a leader in the post- biblical era who stressed the importance of equipping those who were in pastoral ministry. Sitter pointed out Origen wrote, “a pastor was called to function as a teacher, guide, a friend for the members of the flock, the great third-century teacher. The pastor’s work depended on setting a good example or demonstrating ‘perfection’ (maturity of faith), for how could a pastor nurture in others what was lacking in his own life? There is no moral progress without the person of the

spiritual helper, without the living example and loving participation of someone who is perfect.”¹²⁴ It is clear that Origen saw the need in pastors being well equipped to lead others. However, Mark Ellingsen points out that Origen and Tertullian, “forbade a women to speak in the church, as in the Pauline literature.”¹²⁵

This researcher strongly disagrees with their views concerning women to speak in church. The church has to be open for all classes, sex and races. It is vital that the leadership of this context see the importance of pastoral leadership being trained and equipped to enable those around them in ministry regardless of their plight. The fourth-century bishop, Gregory of Nazianzus, stated, “a man must himself be cleaned before cleansing others; himself become wise, that he may make others wise; become light, and then give light; draw near to God, and so bring others near.”¹²⁶

Augustine of Hippo equipped others leaders by giving them sound advice about the ministry. He offered some advice on how to preach and teach by claiming “that the technique of teaching and communication (i.e., rhetoric) are advantageous only when God uses them. For God could give the gospel to humankind without human agency.”¹²⁷ Augustine offered advice in response to various matters of discipline or turmoil in the churches. He claims that “it its best to honor local customs when there are no prescriptions by Scripture and Tradition. When addressing congregational sloth,

¹²⁴Sittser, 66.

¹²⁵Mark Ellingsen, *Reclaiming Our Roots: An Inclusive Introduction to Church History Volume 1 The Late First Century to the Eve of the Reformation* (Harrisburg, PA; Trinity Press International, 1999), 45.

¹²⁶ Sittser, 66.

¹²⁷Mark Ellingsen, *The Richness of Augustine: His Contextual & Pastoral Theology* (Louisville, KY; Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 117.

Augustine asserts that it is good if pastors receive honor, but they ought not exult in it.¹²⁸

It is clear that Augustine is giving sound advice to those leaders during that era. Leaders in this context must be open to sound advice as well if they are going to be transformed.

Sittser points how Augustine equipped other pastors and leaders during his era. He stated that:

As a bishop he organized a quasi- monastic community for pastors of the church. He sketched a rule for monasteries too, though not by intention. While serving as bishop he wrote a letter to a group of women whose nunnery was being torn apart by dissension. In the letter Augustine outlined principles that a community should follow if it hopes to be healthy. Like Basil, he believed that living with others is necessary for the cultivation of spiritual maturity, for life in community provides the best- in fact, the only- setting in which the most important of all virtues can be formed, and that is the virtue of love. Perfection in the spiritual life is impossible to attain as long as a person lives alone, for how can that person learn how to love? Over time this 'Rule of St. Augustine', as it came to be called, was adapted to a variety of setting.¹²⁹

This researcher believes that leadership of this context must adhere to some of these great truths to strength the overall context. There must be principles (from the Bible) that will cultivate spiritual maturity of the context. Discipleship training and leadership training must continue to bring about a great change in the context.

Martin Luther equipped others in the ministry through teaching and preacher. He was one of the great reformers of his time. While at Wittenberg, Luther discovered a new profound scripture that changed his life. The scripture was Roman 1:17 that talks about the righteousness of God which lead to his great transformation as a monk. Luther stated:

This immediately made me feel as though I had been born again and as though I had entered through open gates into paradise itself. From that moment, I saw the whole face of Scripture in a new

¹²⁸Ibid., 118.

¹²⁹Sittser, 105.

light... And now, where I once hated the phrase, 'the righteousness of God,' I began to love and extol it as the sweetest of phrases, so that this passage in Paul became the very gate of paradise to me.

After this great awaking in the life of Luther, he began teaching Scripture to the faculty and students in Wittenberg winning them over to his point of view. As he equipped others to his way of thinking, "he also began to challenge abuses in the church, such as the sale of indulgences, which popes dispensed in order to reduce the number of years the faithful had to spend in purgatory."¹³⁰ Out of his frustration and faith, On October 31, 1517 he posted the ninety-five page theses that challenged the indulgences of the church and challenged them for a debate.

Mark Ellingsen points how Luther was instrumental in equipping women for ministry. He stated that "Luther's general concern about the status of women is evident in his advocacy of education for girls as well as boys. His interaction with women's issues also took the form of reflections on their role as leaders in the church"¹³¹ This researcher believes that this context must be advocates for those who are without a voice, like women, children and the less fortunate.

Martin Luther King Jr. was instrumental in equipping others to lead a great movement against segregation. In 1955 when a well-respected African American working woman refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus, it led to a movement to protest segregation. Martin Luther King Jr. was cast into the leadership role. Ellingsen points out that King, "was cast into the leadership of an eventually successful bus boycott by African Americans in the community. Later sit-ins and marches in Montgomery,

¹³⁰Sittser, 216.

¹³¹Mark Ellingsen, *Reclaiming Our Roots An Inclusive Introduction to Church History Volume II from Martin Luther to Martin Luther King Jr.* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International. 1999), 49.

Birmingham, Selma, Greensboro (involving students of North Carolina A & T), and finally Washington succeeded in exerting enough political pressure to bring about a civil rights bill and the eventual end of legalized segregation.

On the way, King's vigorous advocacy of nonviolent resistance led to his receiving the converted Nobel Peace Prize."¹³² King was a great leader and motivator of the masses. This researcher believes that leadership of this context must motivate the masses to do a great work for God. The only way they will move is through motivation. During the National Baptist Convention, Martin Luther King Jr. led a group of leaders to start a new convention over the validity of J.H. Jackson presidency.

Ellingsen points out, "these animosities, exacerbated by another dispute about the next election of the convention's president, as well as the conflicts over the best civil rights strategy, led King and many of his admirers to leave the convention and form the Progressive National Baptist Convention in 1961."¹³³ This researcher believes that the leadership in this context must see beyond the animosity of a few and lead others to a place where they can help utilize their God-given potential.

In conclusion, historically the challenge that has come from change has caused some discontentment in the people. The discontentment is an indicator that change is taking place. In the midst of their discontentment, it shows a sign of unbelief in the Creator. This is often called a "crisis of unbelief." If change is going to be effective, there must be people in leadership that can manage that change and the conflict that it may bring. Historically, in dealing with the challenging that comes from change, leadership has seen the need to be equipped to manage conflict.

¹³²Ibid., 360.

¹³³Ibid., 361.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research was the methodology adopted for this project to investigate the general knowledge of select members of a traditional church before and after effective training in leadership. John W. Creswell, in his book entitled *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative and mixed Methods Approaches*, suggested the use of Qualitative research in the following ways: open end questions, emerging approaches, text, or image data.¹ It would include testing an experimental group to measure whether or not any significant progress was made in their knowledge about church leadership.

The experimental group consisted of nine persons who held a leadership position and three who did not at the time of the project. The study was done at the First Church of Newport News (Baptist), Newport News, Virginia. The experimental group was asked to be a part of this six week project that focused on equipping leaders to lead others in the 21st century.

The researcher discovered that many of the leaders and non-leaders in the focus group were excited about the project, the transformation and information that it would bring. A pre/post –test was administered for the purpose of evaluating the results. A

¹ John W. Creswell, *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Second edition (Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, 2003), 19.

strategy was adopted for data collection during each session to determine the effectiveness.

Statement of the Problem

It is the opinion of the researcher that the leadership of the church had experienced many challenges and changes. The context expressed their concerns regarding the lack of effective leadership in the church, the changes that were taking place and the conflict that the changes were causing. Most of the leadership, at that time, were seasoned and had been serving in positions for years. There was a need to equip the leaders in the context to do ministry and missions. Some in the context expressed their desire to be trained for leadership. Therefore, a leadership model was designed to strengthen the leadership of the church by equipping leaders to lead others and become more effective leaders in the 21st century.

Hypothesis

Twelve key leaders can be transformed by effective training, teaching and preaching. This transformation will in turn produce more effective leaders. The hypothesis will be tested with the use of surveys, group assessments and oral and written tests.

Intervention (Description of Ministry Project)

The purpose of this strategic study was to develop the effectiveness of the leadership for First Church Newport News (Baptist) in Newport News, Virginia. The

intervention consisted of four major components: (a) Pre-test of the basic line knowledge of the leaders understanding of leadership, (b) Leaders' assessment tool to discover their leadership style, (c) Observation of leaders during training sessions to determine if they comprehended the material, (d) Post-test of the basic line knowledge of the leaders understanding of leadership at the end of the project.

At this stage in the research, the leadership will be defined as *the twelve*. The qualitative research method was chosen to prove that by training the twelve, they can become more effective in leading others in the 21st century. The project consisted of six weeks of training, teaching and preaching about leadership. The leadership model was based on the models presented in chapter three. A series of five sermons on the topic, *Equipping Leaders to Lead Others: A Leadership Paradigm for the Twenty First Century*, were delivered over a five week period and a five week Bible study series was taught from the book, *Setting the House in Order* by Geoffrey Guns. In addition, there were three training sessions on administrative skills, discovering your leadership style and conflict resolution (Appendix A).

The first paradigm of change was the training and equipping "the twelve" to deal with administrative skills. They were taught the major points of the prescription for collaboration of leadership, and the process of connections and systems presented by Charles Tidwell in his book *Church Administration Effective Leadership for Ministry*.

Next, they were taught how to prepare agendas and the components that should be on the agenda such as: The purpose of the meeting, preparing an opening statement, prayer, review of last meeting and action items, content of the desired outcome, closing ,

review action steps/who/time, next agenda, thanks/ celebration recognition, and joys and concerns and prayers (Appendix A, B). Then, they were taught ministry planning. A template was used to evaluate how to plan to achieve a desired outcome that will help to bring about transformation in the lives of participants (discipleship) (Appendix A, B).

Finally, they were taught how to do strategic planning and keep up with accomplishments. A template outlined significant accomplishments, top opportunity areas, key learning, and next steps (Appendix A, B).

The second paradigm of change was the training and equipping “the twelve” to recognize their leadership style. The instrument used was the Behavior Individuality Traits Profile. This profile helped the leader discover his or her particular style. There were four categories: commander, coach, counselor, and conductor. In discovering their unique style of leadership, they could be more effective in leading others to discover theirs. In the sermon series, we dealt with some of these styles.

The third paradigm of change involved equipping the twelve with the tools on conflict resolution. They were taught how to plan an interpersonal conflict resolution session. Before the resolution session, they were to consider the following questions:

- (1) What is the desired outcome on this meeting? What is your goal for the relationship/situation, and how would you like to be perceived at the end of the session?
- (2) What are the potential causes of the conflict? What did each party contribute to the conflict?
- (3) How do the other people involved perceive the conflict?
- (4) How might the other people respond to this meeting? How might they feel? What might they say? How could you respond to their feelings/comments?

During the meeting, these steps were to be followed: (1) Establish rapport and ground rules. Set the stage for openness, respect, and mutually satisfactory problem-solving (not criticism). (2) Describe the conflict. Be objective and specific. (3) Ask others to share their perspectives. Listen to what they have to say without assuming you already have all the information you need. (4) Identify the points of agreement and disagreement. (5) Solicit potential solutions from the parties involved. If you are one of the parties, offer your own suggestions. (6) Evaluate the options. Which ones will satisfy all people involved? Remind everyone that the goal is mutual satisfaction, not a victory for one side, and that everyone might have to compromise. (7) Select an option and develop a plan of action. Be specific about who will do what and by when. (8) End the meeting with expressions of appreciation for each person's participation and contribution to the process.

In addition, the twelve were taught how to lead through transition (change). A template helped them prepare for leading a group through an upcoming change (Appendix A, B). In the sermon series, we dealt with areas of change and the results of change.

Research Design

The purpose of this experimental study was to test the theory that leaders can be equipped to lead others to do effective ministry. The study also sought to show the leader his or her weaknesses and strengths and expose the leaders to three major areas that would help them bring about meaningful change in the context. It was designed to expose

the twelve key leaders to administrative skills, styles of leadership, and conflict resolution.

The study was designed to evaluate the following question:

1. Are you familiar with the basic administrative skills in leading a ministry?
2. What are your strengths/ weaknesses in the ministry?
3. What is your attitude about change?
4. Do you know your particular style of leadership?
5. Are you equipped to handle conflict management?
6. What is the difference between interpersonal conflict and situational conflict?

Measurement

The measurement of the project was determined by a qualitative method using data triangulation. Data triangulation involves the use of different sources of data and information. This researcher used surveys, group assessment, and oral and written tests to measure the effectiveness of the project.

Instrumentation

A pre-test and post-test were administered to determine the general knowledge of the leaders and the effectiveness of the project. The group was also given questions to answer after each sermon and bible study to test their understanding of the material. These instruments were vital in helping to determine the effectiveness of the project.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE

In this chapter, this researcher will share the field experience of the First Church of Newport News (Baptist). There was a special group of persons, the *twelve*, who were called together to be part of a focus group that would study leadership in the church. The group consisted of persons from all areas of the church. Eight of the twelve people in the group held leadership positions in the church, whereas four did not. The twelve ranged in age from 29 to 80. They were given instructions, assignments and expectations for the next six weeks.

Week One

The researcher gave a pre-test concerning the areas in which the project would focus. Then there were a series of questions involving attitude and knowledge concerning administrative skills, leadership styles, and conflict resolution. A *Behavior Individuality Traits*¹ test was given to discover how they approach challenges, how they interact with people, what pace they should take, and how they should respond to structure. It revealed the leadership style of that person. Their style could be commander, coach, counselor, or conductor. The commander was likely to be a driven individual who enjoys competition,

¹John Jackson and Lorraine Bosse'-Smith, *Leveraging Your Leadership Style* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007), 23.

whether it is with themselves or others. They keep a fast pace and focus on results. The coach tends to be an interactive individual who enjoys people, whether it is large or small groups. They are energetic and must have variety. The counselor was shy and enjoys a supportive environment, whether it is at work or at home. They prefer a slower pace and put relationships first.

The conductor was a more focused individual who enjoys structure, whether it is at work or at home. They analyze before they decide in order to ensure that they will be correct and accurate. After giving the profile, it was discovered that 16.66 percent were coaches, 41.66 percent were counselors, and 41.66 percent were conductors. This researcher found it amazing that none of the participants fell in the category of commanders who tended to be driven individuals who enjoy competition, whether it is with themselves or others.

Next, the participants were introduced to the biblical, theological, and historical aspects of leadership found in chapter three. It was shared with them for the six weeks, during this period, they were going to explore, "What it really means to be equipped to lead others in the 21st century and how to bring about meaningful change in this context." During this session, we looked at God as a liberator and Jesus as a liberator from a theological perspective. We explored the Jethro-Moses model and the Jesus model of leadership from a biblical perspective.

Finally, we viewed leadership from a historical perspective and examined how other leaders dealt with problems similar to those in this context.

Week Two

The sermon series began with the sub- topic, “*Confrontation with the Creator*” (Exodus 3:1-6, 14). The objective was to teach that in order to effectively lead others; every leader should have a confrontation with God. It is through your confrontation that you experience and understand the preparation for meeting God as he really is. Secondly, it is through your confrontation that you experience the realization of meeting God as he really is. Thirdly, it is through your confrontation that you know the identity of God as he really is. This researcher generated two questions for “the twelve” to consider: (1) Is confrontation good for the leader? Explain? (2) Who is fit to lead?

Of the respondents, 100 percent believe that confrontation is good and healthy for a growing leader. They believe that it makes you stronger to do the work of God. 91.66 percent believe that a person who is fit to lead must hear the voice of God and follow Him. Only 8.3 percent believe that you must have strong administrative skills to lead others.

The Bible Study was from the chapter *Teaching Respect for Spiritual Authority*. The lesson introduced the twelve to the concept of spiritual authority. Spiritual authority is that authority that is established in the chain of God’s divine prerogative in the establishment of order and discipline within creation. Two questions were generated for the twelve to consider: (1)What is spiritual authority and what makes it different from secular authority? (2) Why is it critical that a congregation be taught about spiritual

authority? It was through discussion that the group realized the difference between spiritual and secular authority.

Week Three

The second sermon in the series was "*Congregational Conflict*" (Exodus 14:10-20). The objective of the sermon was to inform church leaders of the importance of being prepared for the conflict and discontentment that change brings on. In the midst of conflict, it is important to be careful not to allow conflict to cause you to focus on the impossibilities. In the face of an impossibility our first response is to *Go Back*, the second response is to *Stand Still* and the third response is to yield to God's direction and *Go Forward*. The questions this researcher presented to the twelve were: (1) Is conflict healthy or unhealthy for the congregation? Please explain? (2) What is the difference between interpersonal conflict and situational conflict? Of those responding, 100 percent indicated that conflict is healthy. They asserted that to have people with varying viewpoints within an organization will help to strengthen viewpoints with the group. If the leaders only have people that agree with them, they will always have the same viewpoint. Of those responding, 100 percent knew the difference between interpersonal and situational conflict.

The second Bible Study session was a continuation of *Teaching Respect for Spiritual Authority*. The twelve looked at the believer's authority, biblical authority, and congregational authority. It was discussed how the church can lose its spiritual authority by failing to be the people of God, living under the authority of God. The questions for dialogue were: (1) Discuss the various types of authority and why they are important? (2)

What role does spiritual authority play in your local church? The group discussed the importance of spiritual authority and how God has divine order in the church.

The twelve had a training session dealing with interpersonal conflict resolution session. It was fruitful because the leaders were given a worksheet on how to deal with conflict (Appendix 1). Then they were presented a situation that they had to work through. It gave directions on how to prepare before the meeting and how to conduct the meeting. The group was very open to suggestions and ideas from their peers. The session was very informative.

Week Four

The third sermon in the series was entitled "*A Crowd of Crybabies*" (Exodus 15:22-23). The objective of the sermon is to inform them that impatient people will be easy to recognize because they will be the ones murmuring and complaining. Terry Thomas suggested that conflict occurs when people lose sight of the vision to which God has called them.² They praise God one day for His glorious salvation and then complain to Him the first time bitter waters are present. This experience taught the people of Israel some valuable lessons about life, themselves, and the Lord. The questions for consideration were: (1) What causes people to be discontent? (2) What causes fear and frustration with followers? (3) What lessons did Israel learn from this experience? Of those responding, 50 percent indicated that fear of the unknown or change causes discontent, 40 percent indicated that parishioners wanting their own way were causes of discontent and 10 percent indicated a lack of faith as a cause of discontent.

²Terry Thomas. 149.

Of those responding, 50 percent asserted that the lack of understanding or lack of faith (Biblical ignorance) is the cause of fear and frustration and 40 percent believe that the loss of status is the cause of fear and frustration. Of those responding, 83.3 percent agreed that the lessons learned about life are a combination of bitter and sweet, about them in situations that test their faith, and about knowing what God has planned for them, 16.7 percent gave no response.

The Bible Study dealt with *Overcoming Rebellion Against Spiritual Leadership Authority*. The lesson focused on how Satan does not try to attack and destroy one particular kind of congregation, but he is out to wreck all congregations. We looked at rebellion in the scripture and the effect it has had on the church. The question raised for discussion was: What are the most effective ways of dealing with rebellion among congregational leaders and members who seek to influence congregational direction? The remedies that the lesson offered were dealt with.

Week Five

The sermon series dealt with *Faith Under Construction* (Exodus 16:1-13). The objective of the sermon was to help the twelve to realize how important faith is for the journey. The sermon pointed out that when your faith is under construction you will discover your vocation, location and validation. The questions for consideration were: (1) How important is faith for the journey? (2) What will you discover when your faith is under construction? Of those responding, 91.6 percent indicated that faith is extremely important for the journey because it is what pleases God and 8.34 percent did not answer the question.

The Bible Study was a continuation of *Overcoming Rebellion Against Spiritual Leadership Authority*. The lesson focused on the problem of spiritual rebellion in the church today, signs of the spirit of rebellion in the congregation, and remedies for overcoming the spirit of rebellion. The question for discussion was: Why is it essential the entire congregation deal with rebellion in its midst?

The twelve had a training session on helping the ministry leaders plan for upcoming events and how to develop effective agendas with a desired outcome (Appendix I). The session was fruitful because many of the leaders did not know how to develop an effective agenda with a desired outcome.

Week Six

The sermon series dealt with *A Servant Leader* (John 13:1-17). The objective of the sermon was to stress the importance of leaders being servants to the people. This researcher pointed out that Jesus was successful in mission because he was a servant. As a servant leader, the simple ritual of washing the disciples' feet:(a) reflected a great theological truth, (b) gave His followers an example, and (3) helped show how we today are to relate to the strangers who slip in among us.

The questions the researcher raised were: (a)What is a servant leader? (b) What is the requirement for servant leadership? (c) When Jesus washed the disciples' feet, it was a sign of what? Should leaders have this same attribute? Of those responding, 100 percent agreed that a servant leader is one who is willing to do all that is needed to accomplish tasks. They lead by example and do what is needed to motivate the team. Of those responding, 100 percent agreed that a requirement of servant leadership is taking on

menial task and having a spirit of humility. When Jesus washed the disciples' feet, 75percent asserted that it was a sign of humility, 16.66 percent gave no response and 8.34 percent called the act spiritual cleansing.

Should leaders have the same attribute? Of those responding, 83.33 percent said *yes* and 16.67 percent gave no response.

The Bible Study was a continuation of *Overcoming Rebellion Against Spiritual Leadership Authority*. The lesson focused on the problem of spiritual rebellion in the church today, signs of the spirit of rebellion in the congregation, and remedies for overcoming the spirit of rebellion. The question for discussion: Why is it essential that the entire congregation deal with rebellion in its midst? The group saw the importance of how the congregation is affected by those who are rebellious against those who are in spiritual leadership. They didn't realize how it affects those in spiritual leadership.

The twelve had a training session about leading through transition (Appendix I). The session dealt with how to bring about change in the local church. The worksheet was a guide to prepare to lead a group through upcoming changes. It equipped them with the tools they need to bring about meaningful change. The attitude of the group was very optimistic because they felt very equipped to handle the task that was before them. They practiced on each other and raised questions about certain groups in the church that had tendencies to be negative.

Finally, a post test was given to determine their attitude and knowledge concerning administrative skills, styles of leadership, and conflict resolution. It was the same test that was given at the beginning of the session. The analysis showed that after

the training there was a 2.1 percent variance in what the twelve had learned (APPENDIX

B). The hypothesis was validated.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION

As this researcher reflects on this experience, it is an undeniable fact that no complete transformation of leaders can be done in the six week sessions. The transformation process only begins there but is an opportunity to raise and address concerns about the overall leadership in the church. The twelve were given the information for transformation and it appeared to be moving the leadership in the right direction. However, this researcher realizes that it will take time to bring about transformation and effective change.

Before starting this project, the researcher assumed that he had a broad understanding of leadership. However, by listening to the voices of those who had experience and wisdom on their side, he became aware of how much he did not know. This project has taken the researcher to another level of understand. He had grown with the twelve that he was leading.

This researcher learned some beneficial lessons during this project. The first is that leadership is about empowering those around you to help you bear the load of leadership. The model that was developed was helpful in doing this. When observing how Moses and Jesus empowered those around them to do the work, it helped this researcher to understand that he needed to rely upon other people to help bear the responsibilities that come with leadership. There must be a collaboration of leadership,

processes, and systems. This method will enable the leader to be more effective. In developing leaders, the researcher has built some relationships with persons who have caught hold to the vision and are running with it.

The second lesson learned is that change can bring on many challenges. When reflecting upon all the challenges that this writer has experience in the ministry, it was because change was taking place. Conflict/challenges can be healthy. In teaching the lessons and preaching the sermons, the researcher did not want to give the impression that it was okay to be in conflict but that conflict could help us to understand each other and find mutual ground. It also opens the door for dialogue.

The third lesson learned is that the church is open to new and creative ideas from leadership. When the twelve met, they were excited about the new methods and models of leadership that they were going to experience. They were open to the idea of teaching other leaders the information that was shared with them. They were instrumental in shaping my attitude about the leadership of the church because they were a part of the culture. They would often encourage this researcher to keep a positive attitude about what God is going to do in the church. The leadership team was a broad spectrum of persons across the church. A few of them were educators, retirees, new members, young adult professionals and non- professionals. They opened this researcher's eyes to things that the church could be doing.

Finally, as the researcher reflects on this project, it has sharpened his knowledge and awareness concerning leadership. It has helped him to become a better leader and pastor. I now have a model that can be shared with others who are interested in equipping

their leaders for effective ministry. This model has strengthened this researcher's tools and enhanced his understanding about leadership and the different components that are involved in leadership.

Summary and Conclusion

In summary, this researcher learned that it will take more time to bring about a meaningful change in the context. Although there were some change, it was not enough to bring about long term change.

During the study of this project, this writer had the opportunity to learn alongside the twelve. As a teacher/ pastor, this writer was confronted with many challenges and situations that needed the expertise of a well-rounded professional in the church and the community. During the Doctoral Ministry program, this writer developed and discovered new models that enlighten the leadership of the church as well as the writer. The intensive peer sessions have given this writer a fresh look at the bright and brilliant stars that are shining for the glory of God.

This writer was able to equip and develop stronger leaders to be more effective in the office of leadership and develop a paradigm for the 21st century. As pastor of First Church, I have started intense training and recruiting for the leadership of the church. The entire leadership of the church is receiving training using as a manual, the *Five Star Church: Transforming Your Ministry into Teams*¹ and other resources were also used. The project has helped the leadership gain a sense of purpose and direction.

¹E. Stanley Ott, *Transform Your Church with Ministry Teams* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004).

The expectations this writer has concerning the ministry are high. He has seen lives changed and transformed by teaching and preaching the different models presented in this paper. It will take the help of the Holy Spirit to move and make persons into what God has called them to be in the world in which we live. The church should be an agent of change in the community. God changes people and people change the community. This writer continues to believe that God is calling him to transform a generation (through leadership) that has been hurt and harmed by past experiences into a paradigm of a refreshing experience with God through serving the church and community at large.

The church's journey was somewhat like this writer's spiritual journey. It had experienced some great success and disappointments but this writer believes that God is calling this context to bring certainty in the midst of uncertainty and see the potential to push beyond the perils of life and maintain a sense of great joy.

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processes, and systems. This method will enable the leader to be more effective. In developing leaders, the researcher has built some relationships with persons who have caught hold to the vision and are running with it.

The second lesson learned is that change can bring on many challenges. When reflecting upon all the challenges that this writer has experience in the ministry, it was because change was taking place. Conflict/challenges can be healthy. In teaching the lessons and preaching the sermons, the researcher did not want to give the impression that it was okay to be in conflict but that conflict could help us to understand each other and find mutual ground. It also opens the door for dialogue.

The third lesson learned is that the church is open to new and creative ideas from leadership. When the twelve met, they were excited about the new methods and models of leadership that they were going to experience. They were open to the idea of teaching other leaders the information that was shared with them. They were instrumental in shaping my attitude about the leadership of the church because they were a part of the culture. They would often encourage this researcher to keep a positive attitude about what God is going to do in the church. The leadership team was a broad spectrum of persons across the church. A few of them were educators, retirees, new members, young adult professionals and non- professionals. They opened this researcher's eyes to things that the church could be doing.

Finally, as the researcher reflects on this project, it has sharpened his knowledge and awareness concerning leadership. It has helped him to become a better leader and pastor. I now have a model that can be shared with others who are interested in equipping

The expectations this writer has concerning the ministry are high. He has seen lives changed and transformed by teaching and preaching the different models presented in this paper. It will take the help of the Holy Spirit to move and make persons into what God has called them to be in the world in which we live. The church should be an agent of change in the community. God changes people and people change the community. This writer continues to believe that God is calling him to transform a generation (through leadership) that has been hurt and harmed by past experiences into a paradigm of a refreshing experience with God through serving the church and community at large.

The church's journey was somewhat like this writer's spiritual journey. It had experienced some great success and disappointments but this writer believes that God is calling this context to bring certainty in the midst of uncertainty and see the potential to push beyond the perils of life and maintain a sense of great joy.

APPENDIX A
SERMONS, BIBLE STUDIES AND STUDY QUESTIONS

APPENDIX I

WEEK ONE

1. Pre-test Questionnaire.
2. Assessment of identifying your leadership style.
3. Defining Leadership Biblical/Theological/Historical

PRE-TEST QUESTIONS

	STRONGLY DISAGREE				STRONGLY AGREE			
1. I clearly understand my responsibilities as a church Leaders.								
2. I understand and follow spiritual authority in church.								
3. I communicate effectively as a church leader.								
4. As a leader of the church, I serve in areas for which I am gifted.								
5. I regularly encounter God in life-changing ways.								
6. I display a spirit of humility and service.								

7. I promote team work with those I lead.									
8. I deal effectively with conflict by avoiding it.									
9. I feel that conflict shouldn't be in the church.									
10. I feel well prepared to handle conflict.									
11. I feel well equipped to lead people.									
12. I am familiar with a biblical model of leadership to which I can model after.									
13. I view change as a something good.									
14. I believe that discipleship training will help in my development as a leader.									
15. I am impatient when it comes to leading people.									
16. Would you define leadership as mobilizing people to move from a state beneath their God given potentiality while guiding them to a position of promise and possibility whereby their potentiality can be actualized.									
17. Is character an important element in Christian leadership?									

18. Is the ability to bring about change a key element in leadership?							
19. New proposals, changes, and leadership positions must be clear so that the most unlearned mind can comprehend and understand what is being said.							
20. Feelings and emotions often are much more powerful thought or reason in church conflict.							

Assessment Instructions

Read the following questions and circle the answer that you feel best describes you.

- ❖ DO be honest and answer each question as you really are. Remember, answers are not “right or wrong.”
- ❖ DO NOT answer questions as you would “like to be” or wish you were. This assessment is only as accurate as your honesty.
- ❖ DO go with your response or “gut” feeling, as it is likely the most accurate.
- ❖ DO NOT spend a lot of time analyzing, thinking about, or contemplating an answer.

NOTE: If you would answer differently at work versus at home, use work as your reference.

Ready? Here you go . . .

1. I would describe myself as mostly . . .
 - A. outgoing, but I like to get things done
 - B. outgoing, and I like interacting with people
 - C. reserved, but I enjoy one-on-one relationships
 - D. reserved, and I like systematically analyzing or planning things

2. If you asked a close friend or family member about me, he or she would say that I am...
- A. a stable, supportive person
 - B. a driven and goal-oriented individual
 - C. a cautious, organized individual
 - D. an inspirational, fun person
3. When I have a choice, I like . . .
- A. a structured, calculated pace with little change
 - B. a fast, intense pace with purpose
 - C. a fast, high-energy pace with lots of change
 - D. a slow, methodical pace with no change
4. In my opinion, rules . . .
- A. can be bent or broken. There are too many anyway
 - B. can help people get along by providing stability and certainty
 - C. are for other people
 - D. are necessary for a structured and orderly world

5. Given a choice, I would prefer to wear

- A. sharp and classy suits or business attire
- B. tried and true classic clothes that are practical
- C. bright, fun-colored outfits that are hip and trendy
- D. calming, subtle-colored clothes that are comfortable

6. Under stress, I may . . .

- A. get impatient an look
- B. retreat to solitude and withdraw emotionally
- C. become quite talkative and disorganized
- D. over analyze and become critical

7. My life motto is . . .

- A. everything is done for a reason
- B. go for it!
- C. all for one and one for all!
- D. We need each other

8. When making decisions, I . . .

- A. quickly decide and press on
- B. tend to follow popular opinion
- C. ask a close friend what he or she thinks
- D. gather information and research in order to make the right decision

9. At a party or large gathering, I am likely to . . .

- A. find an excuse not to attend. I don't like parties
- B. enjoy mingling and meeting new people
- C. look for a friend or someone I know and usually hang out with just that person
- D. make an appearance, shake some hands, and leave if there is no particular reason for me to be there (or—if there isn't anything in it for me)

10. Given a choice, I would prefer to drive . . .

- A. a fast sports car
- B. a reliable, modest midsized car
- C.

D. a fun, new, and trendy vehicle

E. a practical, economical car

11. When communicating with others, I tend to . . .

A. listen more than I talk

B. state my opinion directly

C. speak precisely and accurately

D. talk more than I listen

12. When given a project to complete, I immediately . . .

A. process and analyze to determine the most strategic course of action

B. ask questions regarding the time frame, workload, and requirements

C. delegate with directives

D. talk it over with others and see who can help

13. When presenting to the board, I . . .

A. methodically address concerns and issues raised

B. quickly get to the bottom line/financial implications

C. share accomplishments before getting to the facts and figures

- D. provide all facts, figures, and numbers along with forecasts and predictions.

14. When presenting, I rely upon . . .

- A. my ability to communicate quickly and effectively
- B. my latest, greatest techy gadget that complements my communication
- C. my PowerPoint® computer presentation that keeps me on track
- D. my slides, charts, graphs, and Excel® spreadsheets to present data

15. I spend the majority of my work day . . .

- A. with the pedal to the medal
- B. reviewing data and formulating strategic plans
- C. motivating, inspiring, and working through my team
- D. meeting one-on-one with staff to ensure everyone is on track

16. When a crisis arises, I will . . .

- A. inform people of the challenge and rally them around it
- B. share the situation with everyone and petition suggestions
- C. stop the bleeding immediately, then determine next steps

D. refer to policies and procedures on how to respond properly

17. I stay motivated by . . .

A. doing things correctly and efficiently

B. working with a team toward a common goal

C. keeping my focus on the end goal or challenge

D. encouraging others and receiving warranted recognition

18. I manage my time by . . .

A. structuring the day and planning each step out thoroughly

B. being fluid with my day and priorities

C. doing what will get me the most results the quickest first

D. methodically planning out the day

19. When giving performance reviews to employees, I tend to . . .

A. discuss each and every area needing improvement with kudos last

B. build up the relationship first then address some minor concerns

C. provide more encouragement than constructive criticism

D. not make time for them or rush through with little feedback

20. When I have a great idea, I . . .

- A. get everyone working on it, even if we have to change direction
- B. tell everyone about it without any direction
- C. discuss it with the team and solicit feedback
- D. research and analyze it thoroughly before presenting to anyone

For some of you, this was a very easy and quick task. You probably only needed a few minutes to complete the assessment. Others, however, may have actually labored over the questions for quite some time. Resist the temptation to go back and change your answers.

Let's now score your assessment and discover what your BIT (BEHAVIOR INDIVIDUALITY TRAITS) profile is.

Scoring Your BIT

Using the table below, circle the letter that corresponds with each question. Then count up the number of circles in each column and enter the total at the bottom. The column that contains the highest number is your BIT profile!

NOTE: If you have two columns that are the same number, review the brief descriptions below and select the BIT profile you relate with most. Example: If you circled letter B in Question #1, then circle letter B in the table below. If you circled letter C in Question #2, then circle the letter C, and so forth.

Q		Circle Answer			
1	A	B	C	D	
2	B	D	A	C	
3	B	C	D	A	
4	C	A	B	D	
5	A	C	D	B	
6	A	C	B	D	
7	B	C	D	A	
8	A	B	C	D	
9	D	B	C	A	
10	A	C	B	D	
11	B	D	A	C	
12	C	D	B	A	

13	B	C	A	D
14	A	B	C	D
15	A	C	D	B
16	C	A	B	D
17	C	D	B	A
18	C	B	D	A
19	D	C	B	A
20	A	B	C	D
Total				
Fit Profile	Commander	Coach	Counselor	Conductor

Score Sheet: Find your BIT Profile

Read the descriptions below and determine the one you relate with most often and write it down.

BIT Profile Descriptions

Commander. Congratulations! You most likely tend to be a driven individual who enjoys competition, whether it is with yourself or others. You keep a fast pace and focus on results!

Coach. Congratulations! You most likely tend to be an interactive individual who enjoys people, whether it is large or small groups. You are energetic and must have variety.

Counselor. Congratulations! You most likely tend to be a bit on the shy side and enjoy a supportive environment, whether it is at work or at home. You prefer a slower pace and put relationships first.

Conductor. Congratulations! You most likely tend to be a focused individual who enjoys structure, whether it is at work or at home. You analyze before you decide in order to ensure that you will be correct and accurate.

No BIT is better or worse than the other because God made each of us unique. Some leadership traits, however, will help you guide and direct people toward the goal while others will encourage and motivate people. It is all about balance. Remember the example of Jesus?

WEEK TWO

1. Sermon: Confrontation with the Creator: Exodus 3:1-6,14

Questions:

- a. Is confrontation good for the leader
 - b. Who is fit to lead?
 - c. What are qualifications for leadership?
2. Bible Study: *Setting the House in Order: A Guide for leading Change in the Local Church---* Understanding Spiritual Authority.

SERMON

Confrontation with the Creator

(Exodus 3:1-6, 14)

According to Joel Gregory “The whole of the religious life focuses at only one point—your personal confrontation with God as He really is. All of the other personalities, activities, emotions, and institutions of religion lose any meaning apart from confrontation with God as He really is. Surely a singular encounter with God was that of Moses on the mountain with the bush that burned without burning out. The circumstances that led Moses to that moment have their parallel in your own circumstances. Likewise, God comes to us today with the same methods He came to Moses.”¹

¹ Gregory, 22-23.

What did Moses see? (vs. 2)

1. A burning bush:

a. He saw something he never saw before.

What did Moses do? (vs. 3)

1. He turned aside to see with his shoes on.

b. He wanted to come before God any kind of way.

c.

2. The Lord saw what he turned aside to see.

a. God saw his motives.

The living God always takes the initiative to confront you in your life as it actually is.

Understand the Preparation for Meeting God as He Really Is

God moves your life toward a confrontation with Him. You may or may not be conscious of His invisible hand, but that hand pushes and pulls you toward Him. That hand had directed Moses toward the confrontation for eighty years. How does God prepare for The Meeting?

God prepares with devastating events. Forty years early Moses was expelled from the Egyptian court (2:15). He moved from the palace to the pasture, from the companionship of princes to the keeping of the sheep. One could hardly find a more

devastating change of life in world history. For forty years Moses reflected on the shock, bitterness, and finality of expulsion from the Egyptian palace. The devastating event of your own life can always be God's moment.

God prepares in isolated places. God sent Moses "to the far side of the desert" (v. 1), literally behind the wilderness. Far beyond the camp of his clan, Moses went to new, distant, higher grazing grounds. It was a place of aloneness, silence, isolation. "Horeb" means a dry ground, desolation. Moses was in a dry, sterile, barren, bleak, rocky place. He was utterly driven to think of God alone. God meets you when life isolated you. A human loss, an illness, a move—God awaits you in the isolation of it.

God prepares in humbling activities. At eighty years Moses was still the shepherd of his father-in-law's flock. He did not even have land or flock of his own. Egypt faded in his memory. He felt his own life ebbing away. Dreams of achievement and leadership had long before drained away like water into the sand around him. Shock, rejection, and bitterness died in the pasture with the sheep. If God has humbled you it is His path toward a burning encounter.

Remember that the Lord Jesus was prepared in the same way. His life began with devastating events. For thirty years He lived in an isolated place with the humble activities of a carpenter's shop. Then suddenly heaven opened and the Spirit fell.

Experience the Realization of Meeting God as He Really Is

God takes the initiative in the meeting. God does meet you when you do not expect it. Moses expected nothing that day. God takes the initiative by arresting us—a thorn bush, a bramble kept on burning but not being consumed. Moses knew that God had presented Himself in tress (Gen. 18:1; 12:6-7; Judg. 6:11-12; 2 Sam. 5:24) and in fire. Here is a tree that burns and in the personal representative of God. God is always setting bushes on fire, calling you, arresting you, grabbing you. “Earth’s crammed with heaven, And every common bush afire with God; But only he who sees, takes off his shoes” (Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh*).

God takes the initiative in instructing us. He instructs us by what we see. A bush that burns but not burns up! The bush was a humble bramble or thorn. The supernatural had entered the lowest part of the natural, and burned without destroying. This is God’s way. He enters your natural life and shines. The bush is only the vehicle. This is what God does with a Moses. God will burn in Moses for the next forty years without consuming Moses. This is God’s desire for you. Even though your outward person perishes, He will renew day by day.

He instructs us by what we hear. He calls us by name: “Moses, Moses.” Just when we think God has forgotten our address, He summons us by name. God calls us close, but not too close: “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground” (v. 5). The Hebrews took off their shoes where we would take off our hats. When God is really present there is always fellowship and fear, approach and awe. This

ought to keep private devotions and church in a blaze of anticipation. There is no commonness and boredom in the presence of the holy.

What Did God Do?

1. He stopped him first “Do not come any closer” Take off your shoes, the place where you are standing is Holy Ground. Types of shoes we commonly wear:
 - a. Sneakers – Sneaking around
 - b. Flip Flops – No commitment
 - c. High Hills – Higher than everybody else
 - d. Brogans – A heavy, ankle-high work shoe carries a lot of dirt

Know the Identification of God as He Really Is

No moment compares with this moment. God reveals His name. The name of God is not mere identity. God’s name resounds with His character, reputation, and power. Moses knew the names of the Egyptian Gods. They were numerous and successful. But He is the great “I AM.”

God’s name means His continuity in history. He is the God of Moses’ father, Amram. He is the God of all the patriarchs. God had not spoken as He did to Moses for 200 years since His conversation with Jacob. We deal with the same God today who addressed Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That means He keeps His promises, covenants, and plans.

God's name means His activity. Many scholars translate the name of God "I will be what I will be." This means that God is active and reveals Himself to us only in His relationship with us and His activity in our lives. The name of God is not a password to memorize or a secret word to get us into heaven. God gives His name to us in active relationship. Moses would learn for forty years who God is.

God's name means His immediacy. He is "I AM." He will not meet you in your past or in your future but only now, in this razor-thin moment. Unless God is known in the midst of immediate relation, He is not known.

You meet Him in Jesus Christ who said, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58, KJV).²

Sermon questions:

1. Is confrontation good for the leader? Explain?
2. Who is fit to lead?
3. What are qualifications for leadership?

² Ibid.

BIBLE STUDY

SETTING THE HOUSE IN ORDER

by

Geoffrey V. Guns

Teaching Respect for Spiritual Authority

For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it. 2 Corinthians 10:8,NIV.

What is spiritual authority? Francis Frangipane defines spiritual authority as “the power and provision of god to invade and transform the temporal with the power of the eternal.” Dr. Jonathan David defines spiritual authority as, “the authority that is established in the chain of God’s divine prerogative in the establishment of order and discipline within creation. In the established economy of God everything is to “be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40). Let’s understand what Dr. David’s definition means.

Spiritual authority is established by God. Because its origin is in the spiritual realm, it can never be the product of human intelligence, ability or creative genius. Humanity can no more establish spiritual authority than we can create spiritual power.

Spiritual authority establishes an order or hierarchy of authorities that extends throughout all of creation. In Corinthians 11:2 we read “But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.” This also expresses the biblical consistency with how God orders the church.

“And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teacher, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:28).” Dr. David’s definitions means:

Spiritual authority exists for the express purpose of providing biblical government and spiritual order within the congregation. When congregations seek to be completely democratic in their government, they cease to be guided by the Spirit of God. Church constitutions, by-laws, Roberts Rules of Order, job descriptions, and policies are all fine in their proper place. But the first lien of spiritual leadership authority is that which comes through the anointed Senior Pastor. His or her ability to lead and direct the congregation can never be subjected to rules made by men. Congregations governed completely by man-made rules and constitutions may be following documents written by unspiritual leaders. Constitutions and policies can be written to limit pastoral spiritual authority, which would leave the church out of biblical spiritual order. The responsibility of the Senior Pastor is to equip, empower, and release the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:12). In order to effectively achieve this end he/she has to set in order the things that are lacking within the congregation (Titus 1:5).

Spiritual authority includes not only the authority given to the Senior Pastor and other congregational elders, but that which is given to the laity as well. All believers share in the power of God’s Spirit and anointing. The power of God that anoints the preacher is the same power that anoints the laity (see Acts 2:1-4, 10:44; 11:15; 15:8-9). God’s anointing and power is given to all believers who submit in obedience to His authority. Each believer is given authority to exercise his or her spiritual gifts in ministry. However, authority is always given in degrees or at different levels based upon our position and function within the body. We will learn about believer’s authority later in the chapter. The highest level of spiritual leadership authority given in the congregation is always given to the shepherd of the flock. He or she is the congregational “overseer” (see John 10:1-4; Acts 20:28).

A congregation cannot grow and prosper unless the Senior Pastor exercises “full” spiritual leadership authority (see Titus 2:15). One of the major challenges that the apostle Paul had to contend with was related to his exercise of authority (see Corinthians 10:8-13:10). Strong spiritual visionary leadership will always make a difference in the life of a congregation. In many congregations when the Senior Pastor begins to exercise spiritual leadership authority those who stand opposed to his or her right to exercise spiritual authority will interpret it as being “dictatorial.”

Let’s understand the definition of the word “dictator.” History has been filled with dictators whose reigns of terror rose and then came crashing down to the earth. A “dictator” is a leader who considers himself or herself to be the sole authority within an organization. Their decisions are always final. They make decisions without asking for opinions, suggestions or ideas. Dictators do not seek participation nor involvement from anyone under their authority. Differences of opinion with the leaders are always viewed as acts of disloyalty and as a challenge to the leader’s authority. Dictators are to inflict punishment upon those who defy their orders.

Dictatorial leadership is not a trait of the Spirit-filled man or woman God would never permit it in His kingdom and if it does arise it does not last. Spiritual leaders are first servants then leaders. Jesus said authoritarianism described the traits of Gentile leaders who used heavy-handed leadership tactics. He said in mark 10:42. “You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them.” We must not confuse strong pastoral spiritual

leadership authority with authoritarianism. At the center of the question of dictatorial leadership is the unwillingness of some saints to submit to spiritual leadership authority.

Sometimes members will mistake strong Senior Pastoral leadership for dictatorial leadership and the two are not related. Effective, strong visionary leadership is essential for the growth and stability of the congregation. Congregations are people on God's mission. If the congregation is confused and mis-oriented in its ministry and mission focus it ceases to be an effective channel of divine grace. God ordains the shepherd of the flock for the purpose of protecting it from error, false teachers, preachers and to build up and equip the saints for ministry (see John 10:10, 12; Acts 20:29-30; Philippians 1:15-17; Ephesians 4:11-16).

The task of the Senior Pastor as it relates to the exercise of spiritual leadership authority is to set the church in biblical and spiritual order. It is extremely difficult to initiate and sustain transformative congregational spiritual growth without exercising spiritual leadership authority. Titus was left in Crete to help establish, lead, and ground the congregation in correct doctrine and practice. That cannot be done without the proper exercise of spiritual leadership authority. In his letter to Titus, the apostle Paul reminded him of his responsibility. "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you (Titus 1:5)."

Definitions of Power and Authority

There are several different definitions and expressions of authority in the New Testament. Robert W. Pazmino states that "Authority denotes the power that persons display in the areas of legal, political, social, moral, or religious affairs." Further, there

are several ways that authority is expressed within the context of the believer's life and in the life of the church. We will examine a few of them in the following sections.

Exousia

Exousia {pronounced ex-oo-see-ah} is the Greek word for "authority" in the New Testament. It denotes the right or permission that is conferred for the express purpose of carrying out delegated responsibilities. Jesus gave His disciples the authority to teach and preach in His name. They were also given authority over demons and unclean spirits and to heal the sick (see Matthew 9:6; 10:1; 21:23). The captain of a ship has the authority to steer the ship away from storms or other threatening conditions. Exousia can refer to apostolic authority. Writing to the Corinthians Paul stated, "For even if I should boast somewhat further about our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you. I shall not be put to shame" (2 Corinthians 10:8).

Dunamis

Dunamis {pronounced doo-na-mis} is the Greek word for "power" in the New Testament. It denotes the capacity or ability to act. The clearest demonstration of power is seen in God's resurrection of Jesus from the dead (see Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15; 4:10). Jesus gave His disciples authority and power to witness for Him (see Acts 1:8). Dunamis is the power of God in preaching that leads to salvation (see Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:18). Spiritual power is transforming power. The kingdom of God is not a weak or impotent domain, rather it is the kingdom that comes with power (see 1 Corinthians 4:20). Believers experience the power of God's resurrection when Jesus Christ becomes their

Lord (see Philippians 3:10). Sometimes in the New Testament “authority” and power are not always distinguished. For clarity authority is the right to act. Power is the ability to accomplish the work of the ministry.

The Authority of God

God is the highest and supreme authority in the entire universe. There is no authority higher than God. Millard J. Erickson remarked that as ultimate authority God has the right to determine what we believe and how we are to live. God has established His Word as the starting point for our understanding and enlightenment of His ways. Erickson goes on to say that, “From the Christian standpoint, God is the authority in these matters because of who He is. He is the highest being, the one who always has been, who existed before we or any other being came into existence.” God ordained and established authority for the purpose of maintaining and setting things in order in His creation. “Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God (Romans 13:1). Every form of righteous authority that exists in the world today was created by God.

Spiritual authority is critical to the spiritual and numerical growth of the church of Jesus Christ. It is crucial that spiritual authority be properly exercised if the church is to fulfill its mission in the world. Robert W. Pazmino states, “In order to discern the proper use of authority in the church, Christians must clearly identify their mission. Their mission is given by God and their authority undergirds the fulfillments of that particular mission.” He goes on to say that authority is God’s gift to be used in the accomplishment of the Christian mission of world-wide evangelism and it is not for personal ends.

The Authority of Jesus Christ

Any discussion about spiritual authority within the church has to begin with Jesus Christ. Jesus had authority as a preacher, teacher, and healer not because He was elected or appointed, but because of who He is and what He came to do in the world. His authority is bound up in His personhood and power as the Son of God and as the Second Person in the godhead (see John 1:1-12; 2 Corinthians 8:9). Jesus was not a mere human being who was endowed with the supra natural power to heal. Nor was He just another eloquent preacher with the ability to captivate and hold the attention of an audience. Rather He was the living presence of God on the earth (see John 1:14). He was both God and man, fully human and fully divine. As God Jesus performed numerous miracles of healing. As man He emptied Himself became poor and died for sin that we might be saved from God's wrath (see 2 Corinthians 8:9; Philippians 2:5-11).

Jesus' authority was demonstrated through His teachings and miracles. He taught with authority, not like the scribes and Pharisees (see Matthew 7:29; Mark 1:22). The multitudes were amazed as they listened to Him. His teachings came as new, fresh, and authoritative revelations from God. "And they were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, 'What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him'" (Mark 1:27). Roy Zuck remarks that, "Jesus authoritative teaching astounded the multitudes but disturbed the religious leaders." Jesus had no need to rely on other teachers for His teachings. He reinterpreted the Laws of Moses and gave them a higher and deeper meaning. We see this particularly in the Sermon on the Mount (see Matthew 5:17-48). His relationship to the church, Jesus is both

Lord and Savior of the body. As our Lord, we owe Him complete and total allegiance and obedience. The church has never been a democratic organization, for the people and run by the people. The Church is a spiritual monarchy in which Jesus Christ is the King and Ruler (see 1 Timothy 1:17; 6:15, Revelation 17:14; 19:16). Jesus has a unique relationship with the Father as Son (see Matthew 17:5). His relationship as obedient Son earned Him the place of honor along side the Father in glory. He sits at His right hand (see Hebrews 11:1-4).³

Questions for discussions

1. What is spiritual authority and what makes it different from secular authority?
2. Why is it critical that congregations be taught about spiritual authority?

WEEK THREE

1. Sermon: How to Handle Conflict: Exodus 14:10 -23

Question for discussions:

- a. Is conflict healthy or unhealthy for the congregation? Please explain?
- b. What is the different from interpersonal conflict and situational conflict?

³ Guns, *Setting The House In Order*, 39-51.

2. Bible Study: *Setting the House in Order: A Guide to Leading Change in the Local Church: Teaching Respect for Spiritual Authority.*

SERMON

CONGREGATIONAL CONFLICT

(Exodus 14:10-20)

Church leaders need to be prepared for the conflict and discontentment that change brings on. Conflict is inevitable. Terry Thomas argues that, “as we move deeper in the 21st Century, it will become more apparent that we are providing leadership for people who have been socialized to be impatient. The 21st Century, in my estimation, will be characterized by instantiation.”⁴ In essence, we live in a time where people are impatient and their impatience will lead to conflict and discontentment. Whenever there is change in an organization, it will lead to some discontentment. The discontentment will come from those in whom the leader has been called to lead. The impatience people will be easily recognized because they will be the ones murmuring and complaining. In dealing with life-threatening conflict, Herrington, Bonem, and Furr concur with Thomas by saying that conflict, “occurs when people lose sight of the vision to which God has called them. It is found in the Exodus story. After leaving Egypt for the Promised Land, the people lost sight of the mission. They began to murmur against their leadership and they openly disobeyed God. They became more concerned with their own comfort than

⁴ Terry Thomas, 40.

with achievement of God's plan."⁵ When the Israelites comfort was uprooted, then they became complainers.

It is apparent that Moses faced a people who were constantly complaining because of their lack of faith in God to provide provisions for them.

According to Carol Cartmill and Yvonne Gentile, "conflicts usually can be categorized in one of two ways: interpersonal conflicts between two people (I don't like something you said or did) and situational conflicts (I don't like the direction we're taking). Each of these involves different emotions and requires different approaches to manage the conflict and reach resolution."⁶ Moses experience was clearly a situational conflict.

Cartmill and Gentile assert that, "in ministry teams, both interpersonal and situational conflicts can occur, though situational conflicts happen with greater frequency.

Interpersonal conflicts are often the result of miscommunication or a misunderstanding, while situational conflicts typically results from real difference of opinion. Both types have the potential to be beneficial if managed appropriately, and both can damage relationships and more if mishandled or ignored."⁷ According to Geoffrey Guns, "Congregations must contend from time to time with conflict and disagreement.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Cartmill and Gentile, 87.

⁷ Ibid.

One way to define conflict is to say that conflict (1) begins when someone takes an action that (2) is perceived as a threat to someone else's territory (physical, social, power, position) and (3) the threatened person launched a reaction aimed at protecting the territory.”⁸

It appears that complaining and murmuring has been partner to those leaders who have made a great impact on the lives of many. It has propelled them to great levels.

David A. Ramsey argues that:

This wisdom of leadership propelled Martin Luther King to imagine the ‘promise land’ of human equality while we struggle yet 30 years later to comprehend and implement his message in our racially and economically divided cities. The truth of this kind of leadership allowed Mahatma Gandhi to liberate India from Britain's political dominance while we often struggle to liberate ourselves in embarrassing small ways from our stress of living crowded and complex lifestyles. The courage of this leadership required Abraham Lincoln to accept the deaths of half a million of his countrymen and ultimately his own. Yet he healed a broken nation's hope to sponsor life and economic opportunity for our posterity and bring unity to our divided values. The grace of this leadership allowed Nelson Mandela to arise from prison after nearly 30 years of political confinement with the poise, balance, and countenance of a nation's grandfather away from his family on a visit to a foreign land. His graced public posture bespeaks a lifetime of action born from a generation of solitude and imprisonment.”⁹

It appears that complaining and murmuring has been sign of discontentment in the lives of all great leaders. However, there have been those who argue that *resistance can be a healthy indicator that change is occurring*. David A. Ramey points out that, “there are

⁸ Geoffrey V. Guns, 77.

⁹ Ramey, xiii.

some learning psychologists who contend that resistance is a healthy indicator that effective change is occurring. Through our resistance the necessary disequilibrium of perception is occurring that allows us to look at new alternatives and reframe our assumptions in different and innovative ways. Resistance then can be a positive force for growth if managed effectively. ”¹⁰

The power of God is displayed when we move beyond our possibilities. The Hebrew slaves found themselves surrounded by the impossible. Before them was the sea, beside them was the desert, and behind them was the enemy. They faced three alternatives. *They could go back to Egypt, stand still where they were, or go forward.* God commanded them to walk into the impossibility. Conflict will sometime cause you to focus on the impossibilities.

First Church of Newport News (Baptist) is at one such crossroad today. Behind us is a great history of walking forward. In front of us is one of the greater challenges in the history of our church. We must decide to walk forward into that challenge.

¹⁰ Ibid, 159.

CONFLICT WILL SOMETIME CAUSE YOU TO FOCUS ON THE IMPOSSIBILITIES

In the Face of an Impossibility We Can Say, “Go Back.” We may wish to go back when God has just begun to go forward. The Hebrews wanted to go back when they had only begun to go forward under the blessing of God. They thought the beginning was the end. This was the first real challenge they had faced after God delivered them.

The text says, “¹⁰ *As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Didn’t we say to you in Egypt, ‘Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians’? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!” ¹¹*

They wanted to do the right thing the wrong way. They cried out to God, but they cried out in fear rather than faith. It was right to call on God but wrong to call on Him in fear. They did the wrong thing. They blamed their leadership. They did the unthinkable thing. They wanted to reverse God’s blessings and cancel their own history. More than anything else they did the inexcusable thing. They ignored the blessings of God in the past and the providences of God they had already seen.

First Church of Newport News (Baptist) has never said, “We will go back.” The one hundred forty four years of our church’s history has never witnessed a generation or

¹¹ Ex 14:10-12

a pastor who said, "Go back." If we went back, where would we go? Nowhere but decline and decay. We must go forward.

IF WE GO BACK, WE WILL BECOME

Damaged and Destroyed

Defeated and Deleted

Stale and Stagnate

Small and Smelly

Faithless and Fake

Crazy and Confuse

Belittled and Bewildered

Bound and Beaten

Broken and Busted

Sorry and Sick

Salves and Servants

CONFLICT WILL SOMETIME CAUSE YOU TO FOCUS ON THE IMPOSSIBILITIES

In the Face of Impossibility Some Say, “Stand Still.”

Some wish to go neither backward nor forward. They desire to freeze in the present. They stand in paralysis in the midst of opportunity. Moses was going in the right direction when he said, “*Stand still.*” But not far enough.

He believed in divine blessing but not strongly enough in human initiative.

He believed in the divine reality but not strongly enough in human risk.

He believed in divine initiative but not strongly enough in human participation.

Listen to Moses, “*Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.*”¹⁴
The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”¹²

It is never enough to stand still. First Church of Newport News (Baptist) does not have the luxury to say we will stay where we are. Churches do not in fact stand still. They are always moving forward or starting backward. Christians do not stand still. Every day we are either higher or lower in our relationship to God.

¹²Ex 14:13-14.

There are many people who are standing on the Premises but not the Promises.

He promise never to leave you nor forsake you.

He promise never to let you fall.

He promise to keep you in prefect peace.

He promise no weapon form against you shall prosper.

He promise if you call on His name , He will answer.

CONFLICT WILL SOMETIME CAUSE YOU TO FOCUS ON THE IMPOSSIBILITIES

In the Face of an Impossibility God Says, “Go Forward”

There is a divine timing in going forward. There is a time to pray but there is also a time to act. In verse 15, the Lord said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on.” The time for praying was past; the time for acting had come. There is also a time of risk. God told the Israelites to move on into the impossibility. Certainly we should not risk in an imprudent way that tests God. But risk we must. Human instruments often seem insufficient for that risk. An eighty-year-old shepherd holding out a wooden rod over a sea did not appear sufficient for the situation. But it was the rod of God. It was God who said, “Go forward.”

“There is a glory when God says, “Go forward.” Throughout this message the emphasis rests on the glory given to God in the situation. Note verse 18 says “The Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen.”

There is a divine protection when God says, “Go Forward.” That mysterious mystical cloud that had been in front of them moved behind them. God gave them a supernatural protection between them and everything that would harm them.

First Church of Newport News (Baptist) is at a crossroads to go forward. The generations before us in this place risked much. Movement forward will give God glory.

This is also true personally. Every Christian must move forward. We can live in the faith of Paul who said, "He who has begun a good work in you will carry it on to completion" (Phil. 1:6).

GO FORWARD

And the Lord will part the waters

GO FORWARD

And the Lord will take care of Pharaoh

GO FORWARD

And the Lord will fight your battles

GO FORWARD

And the Lord will send forth angelic help

GO FORWARD

And the Lord will make a way out of no way

GO FORWARD

And see what the Lord can do

GO FORWARD

And Watch God, **SHOW UP** and **SHOW OUT**

I tried Him for **MY-SELF**

Question from Sermon:

, a. Is conflict healthy or unhealthy for the congregation? Please explain?

b. What is the different from interpersonal conflict and situational conflict?

BIBLE STUDY

SETTING THE HOUSE IN ORDER

by

Geoffrey V. Guns

Teaching Respect for Spiritual Authority

Believer's Authority

Many believers talk about power and authority, yet they lack understanding of what is authentic biblical spiritual power and authority really. I agree with John Eckhardt who remarked that if the believers want to walk in power they must learn to walk in and under authority. Your authority as a believer in Jesus Christ is directly related to your willingness to follow and be led. Spiritual power is always given to the believer by the Holy Spirit. It can never be purchased, stolen, or manipulated into existence (see Acts 8:14-21). The Gospel of John reminds us, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12, KJV).

What is believer's authority? Believer's authority is the right of every believer to exercise his or her God given spiritual gifts in the name of Jesus Christ and engage in the work of ministry in the name of Jesus Christ. We can exercise spiritual authority as

followers of Jesus Christ on the condition that we walk in faith and understand nature of the power that is in our possession (see Ephesians 1:19).

When we received Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior we came under a new dominion of spiritual authority. One of Satan's primary goals is to maintain control and dominance over our lives. In Jesus Christ we come under a new ruler. Tony Evans says that the problem that some believers have is breaking free of Satan's control. He goes onto say that, "They don't know how to live with their new love. Jesus Christ. They don't know how to respond to this new identity and the new authority in their live."

Jesus has given believers the "right" to gather in His name and to petition the Father on their behalf (see Matthew 19:19-20). This right is conditioned upon our meeting in agreement. We have the authority to bind, loose, restrict, bless and to curse, Matthew 16:19; 18:18; Luke 10:5-6. We have the authority to preach, teach, heal, and to cast out demons in the name of Jesus Christ. This authority has been conferred by Jesus, "And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to heal diseases. And He sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God, and to perform healing" (Luke 9:1-2). Jesus gave specific instructions regarding what the apostles were to do in the exercise of their authority and power.

Believers have the authority to wage spiritual warfare against the powers of spiritual darkness and to pull down the strongholds of Satan (see 2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Our use of spiritual authority is conditioned upon our obedience to God and our walk in the Spirit (see Romans 8:4-11); Galatians 5:16). As we walk in the Spirit we manifest the

fruit of the Holy Spirit, which identifies us with Christ (see Galatians 5:22-26). The fruit of the Spirit of the evidences of a changed life.

Biblical Authority

Biblical authority is the recognition that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, that it is the foundation of all Christian belief, practices, and conduct. What does it mean to say that the Bible is authoritative? It means that the Bible has complete and sole legitimacy as the written and revealed Word of God. The Bible derives its authority from God who inspired the biblical writers to record it for all generations (see Jeremiah 30:1-2, 36:2, 4, 32; 51-60). When the prophets of the Old Testament spoke to the people, they were speaking for God (see Isaiah 1; 2, 8; Jeremiah 16:14ff.).

The gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John record the ministry and message of Jesus Christ. The message of Jesus was authoritative because His words were from God the Father (see Matthew 7:29; Mark 1:22; John 8:26, 28, 42). The Holy Bible is authoritative because it is God's power that leads to salvation (see Romans 1:16). When you and I read and study the Bible, it serves as the light of our lives (see Psalm 119:105). When we allow the Word of God to govern our lives, it keeps us from sin and guards our hearts and minds. David recorded in Psalm 119:9, "How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your Word." (NKJV). The Bible has authority over us; however, we must yield ourselves to its teachings and principles.

The word "Bible" comes from the Greek word *biblios* and it literally means "little books." The word *biblios* is used several times throughout the New Testament to refer to specific writings in the Old Testament. In the English Versions of the New Testament the

word “book” is used to translate the Greek word *biblios*. Matthew 1:1 refers to the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ; Mark 12:36 refers to the book of Moses; Acts 7:42 describes the book of the prophets. Each of these passages refers to individual writings or books. Therefore, the Bible is not a single book, although we like to think of it as a single book; rather it is a collection of 66 books written over a period of nearly 1200 years. There are 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament. The Bible is a collection of sacred writings that reveal the nature of God and His eternal plan for creation and human redemption (see Psalm 19:1ff; Jeremiah 29:11). The Bible is a collection of individual religious books that produce faith in the living God of creation (see Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 2:2).

Congregational Authority

Congregational authority is the authority conferred by Jesus Christ upon the church to be His witnesses in the world (see Acts 1:8). The church of Jesus Christ has been given authority to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (see Matthew 28:19-20).

As members of the body of Christ, we come under the authority of our Head, Jesus Christ. Membership in the body of Christ means that we stand in a set and positioned relationship to other members within the body, including those in authority (see 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:16). By that I mean when God places each of us within the body, He does so according to our gifts and function. As a member of the body, no one member or group of members is greater than the body.

In congregations where the members are not trained and taught the biblical doctrine and order of the church, they can be manipulated and taken advantage of by unspiritual leaders. This happens in many congregations where deacons dominate the pastor and people or where trustees seek to control the finances of the congregation. The tragedy is that the majority of the seminaries and Bible Colleges never teach future leaders how to lead a congregation and set the house in order.

Jesus Christ has given the local body tremendous authority and power, for the purpose of building the kingdom. The body of believers can select persons for particular functions and offices within the body (see Acts 1:24-26; 6:1-6). It is the right of the congregation to make decisions that relate and have regard to the conduct of its structure, ministry and mission. Within the body, there is a hierarchy of authority that exists for conducting the ministry and affairs of the church. “And god has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, and then miracles, than gifts of healings...” (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11; also Acts 15:12-13). The church has the authority to determine what is and what is not acceptable Christian conduct and belief (see Matthew 18:15-18; Acts 15:20; 1 Corinthians 1:10-11; 5:1-4). The authority to determine behavior means that the church is the final court of appeal for all matters that relate to the life of the church and its affairs (see 1 Corinthians 6:11-11; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8; Galatians 6:1).

The church can lose its spiritual authority by failing to be the people of God, living under the authority of God. There are reasons why many congregations are simply ineffective and pose no threat to the kingdom of God. They are out of order. The question

is how do congregations keep their legitimate spiritual authority? Congregations keep their spiritual authority when they meet the following biblical requirements:

- ❖ Live in obedience to God's Word
- ❖ Live out the biblical mandate to make disciples of all nations
- ❖ Serve as the channel for Christian nurture, fellowship, worship, and love
- ❖ Seek to evangelize the un-churched, unsaved and backslidden, rather than practicing and encouraging "transfer growth"
- ❖ Engage in social ministry, reaching the hurting and meeting needs of those within and outside the church to the extend of its resources
- ❖ Live under the authoritative Headship of Jesus Christ
- ❖ Seek to be Spirit-filled, spirit-led, and Spirit-Centered

Questions for Dialogue

1. Discuss the various types of authority and why they are important.
2. What role does spiritual authority play in your local church?¹³

¹³Ibid..

Planning an Interpersonal Conflict

Resolution Session

Before the meeting, consider the following questions:

1. What is the desired outcome of this meeting? What is your goal for the relationship/situation, and how would you like to be perceived at the end of the session?
2. What are the potential causes of the conflict? What did each party contribute to the conflict?
3. How do the other people involved perceive the conflict?
4. How might the other people respond to this meeting? How might they feel? What might they say? How could you respond to their feelings/comments?

During the meeting, follow these steps:

1. Establish rapport and ground rules. Set the stage for openness, respect, and mutually satisfactory problem-solving (not criticism).
2. Describe the conflict. Be objective and specific.

3. Ask others to share their perspectives. Listen to what they have to say without assuming you already have all the information you need.
4. Identify the points of agreement and disagreement.
5. Solicit potential solutions from the parties involved. If you are one of the parties, offer your own suggestions.
6. Evaluate the options. Which ones will satisfy all people involved? Remind everyone that the goal is mutual satisfaction, not a victory for one side, and that everyone might have to compromise.
7. Select an option and develop a plan of action. Be specific about who will do what and by when.
8. End the meeting with expressions of appreciation for each person's participation and contribution to the process/.

Leading Through Transition

Use this worksheet as a guide as you prepare to lead a group through an upcoming change.

1. Why is the change needed? How will the change make things better? How will you communicate the need for change? What format will you use (e.g., in person, in writing, etc.)?
2. Who are your potential advocates for change? How will you recruit them? What are your expectations of them?
3. What is your vision for the future? Practice communicating the vision in a four- to five-sentence summary that you can repeat/rephrase in various ways. How will you share this vision?
4. How will you authorize team members to plan and implement the change? What boundaries will you give them (i.e., what they can and cannot do without approval)?
5. What are some short-term milestones you can target? What will determine “success”?
6. How will you celebrate success along the way and at the end of the journey?

WEEK FOUR

1. Sermon: Crowd of Crybabies – Exodus 14: 10-23

Questions from sermons:

- a. What causes people to be discontent?
- b. What causes fear and frustration with followers?
- c. What lessons did Israel learn from this experience?

2. Bible Study: *Setting the House in Order: A Guide to Leading Change in the Local Church: Overcoming Rebellion Against Spiritual Authority.*

SERMON

A CROWD OF CRYBABIES

Exodus 15:22-23

People are somewhat impatient. The impatience people will be easy recognized because they will be the ones murmuring and complaining. In dealing with life threatening conflict, Herrington, Bonem, and Furr concur with Terry Thomas by saying that conflict, “occurs when people lose sight of the vision to which God has called them. It is found in the Exodus story. After leaving Egypt for the Promised Land, the people lost sight of the mission. They began to murmur against their leadership and they openly disobeyed God. They became more concerned with their own comfort than with

achievement of God's plan."¹⁴ When the Israelites comfort was uprooted, then they became complainers. The Israelites sojourner is recorded as saying:

²² Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. ²³ When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. ²⁴ So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?" ²⁵ Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the LORD made a decree and a law for them, and there he tested them. ²⁶ He said, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you." ²⁷ Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water. ¹ The whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt. ² In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. ³ The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death." ¹⁵

It is apparent that Moses faced a people who were constantly complaining and crying because of their lack of faith in God to provide provisions for them. Moses now was the acknowledged leader. After he led the Israelites into the Desert of Shur, the group traveled for three days without finding water. A promising oasis proved to be a

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Exodus 15:22-16:3

disappointment. The water there was bitter, but no more than the people who had expected to drink it. That spot was named *Marah*, which means “bitter” (15:22–23).

The grumbling people turned their anger against Moses. They expected him to know all the water holes in the Sinai. Moses in turn cried out to the Lord. God directed his attention to a piece of wood which he was to throw into the bitter water. The solution to the problem was near at hand. It often is.

Why the piece of wood? Some think that this was a particular kind of wood that could make bitter water drinkable.¹ Documentation of the claim that modern Arabs make use of such a method of water purification is lacking. Casting this object into the water was probably intended to be a symbolic action designed to convey to the grumbling crowds that something had been done about the water. The sweetening must have been temporary, for the water in that region is today bitter (15:24–25).²

God not only gave his people sweet water at Marah, he also gave them something much sweeter, viz., *a promise*. *Obedience to the voice of God* would guarantee to them *good health*. None of the diseases with which God had smitten Egypt would come upon Israel. *Yahweh is a healer, and he would rather heal than inflict disease as he did in Egypt* (15:26).

As the Israelites pressed on in their pilgrimage they found an abundance of water at Elim. This oasis was in a large plain said to be about a two-hour camel ride south of Marah. It contained twelve springs and seventy palm trees. This detail is added by the eyewitness narrator to suggest that the journey to that spot, however difficult, was well worth it (15:27). *Too many believers encamp permanently at Marah, and never press on*

*in their pilgrimage to taste the refreshment which is waiting at Elim!*¹⁶ Israel

Complaining in Unbelief (15:22–27)

It would be wonderful to linger at the seaside and praise the Lord, but the believer is a pilgrim and must follow God's leading. How strange that God should lead them to a place without water. Yet God must discipline His children so that they may discover their own hearts. When the Jews did see water, they discovered that it was bitter, and immediately they complained to Moses and to God. How wicked the human heart is! *We praise God one day for His glorious salvation and then complain to Him the first time we find bitter waters. This experience taught the people of Israel some valuable lessons:*

A. ABOUT LIFE

Life is a combination of the bitter and the sweet, triumphs and trials. If we are following God, however, we never need fear what comes our way. And after the trial there is often a spiritual "ELIM" (v. 27) where God refreshes us. We must accept the bitter waters with the sweet, knowing that God knows what is best for us.

B. ABOUT THEMSELVES.

Life is a great laboratory, and each experience x-rays our hearts to reveal what we really are. The waters of Marah revealed that the Jews were worldly, thinking only of bodily satisfaction; they were walking by sight, expecting to be satisfied by the world; they were ungrateful, complaining to God when trials came their way.

¹⁶J. E. Smith, *The Pentateuch* 2nd ed., (Joplin, Mo.: College Press Pub. Co., 1993).

BIBLE STUDY

SETTING THE HOUSE IN ORDER

by

Geoffrey V. Guns

Overcoming Rebellion Against

Spiritual Leadership Authority

So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day. 1 Kings

12:19 NIV

The most critical and pressing leadership problem in traditional congregations is the nagging issue of rebellion against spiritual leadership authority. There is no area of church life that I more misunderstood and abused than spiritual leadership authority and church discipline. The misuse of spiritual authority and church discipline can become “spiritual abuse.” In their book, *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse*, David Johnson and Jeff VanVonderen write that “spiritual abuse can occur when a leader uses his or her spiritual position to control or dominate another person.” Spiritual abuse can occur when leaders or believers become so overbearing that they literally seize control of the church and its resources. Through their act of spiritual tyranny and rebellion they hold the church hostage to their narrow and parochial beliefs and attitudes.

The quest for power, control and authority within local congregations is one of the manifestations of the abuse of spiritual authority. One of the most significant effects of spiritual abuse is the gradual destruction of congregational spirituality and vitality. Many congregations have lost their drive and vitality. They feel totally helpless to change or move forward. The most interesting thing about this is that in many instances believers can see it taking place and either feel powerless to change it or be so overcome by apathy that they care little that it happens.

Satan creates the thirst for earthly power, which causes rebellion to reign in many local congregations (see Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:14-18). A congregation that has been highly effective in reaching thousands with the gospel can find itself embroiled in heated conflicts. Sometimes the very growth of the congregation can be the spark that ignites the flame of rebellion. The arrival of new members can create within the hearts of long time members the feeling that they are being threatened for authority. Sometimes members who have been in the same leadership position are threatened when new and younger leaders are appointed. Rather than being a mentor for younger leaders they turn into antagonists.

Satan does not try to attack and destroy one particular kind of congregation, but he is out to wreck all congregations. He wants to sift the church of its power and authority to address matters of grave concern in the community where that church serves. He disrupts the fellowship by creating and fostering confusion. Remember the goal of Satan is to create rebellion and a spirit of defiance against God's will in the world. He did that with Adam and Eve and he continues to try and impose his will today in the church

of Jesus Christ. Satan seeks to exercise and execute his diabolical schemes and plans through individuals within the church. Therefore, it is imperative that we have a thorough understanding of what is and is not legitimate spiritual authority.

Rebellion in the Scriptures

The words “rebel” and “rebellion” have all but dropped out of the vocabulary of the contemporary Christian church. Very few leaders in the church today wish to talk about disobedience and disrespect for spiritual leaders as rebellion against God. Rather than refer to acts of rebellion as what they are, we will gloss over them and seek more civil explanations for them. Yet, the reality is that in the Scriptures. “Images of rebellion are more important than is commonly realized.” There are over on hundred references to rebellion in the Scriptures, especially within the Old Testament. According to the Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, “Not to respect and obey legitimate authority, whether human or divine, is to be guilty of rebellion.” Failure to obey God’s Law remains the most serious act of rebellion.

Rebellion is a callous disregard for God, His Word, and those whom He places in leadership of His people (see Deuteronomy 31:72). It is such a grievous sin that rebellion is comparable to witchcraft and idolatry (see 1 Samuel 15:23). Teaching others to rebel brings not only divine retribution upon the one teaching but also upon their descendants as well (see Jeremiah 28:16; 29:32). God punishes the rebellious man or woman in such a way as to kill the spirit of rebellion that can live and thrive among people. Listed below are some of the instances of rebellion recorded in the Scriptures.

- ❖ Adam and Eve, Genesis 3:1-15
- ❖ Israel's rebellion against the leadership of Moses, Numbers 16:41; 17:10
- ❖ Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and On's rebellion, Numbers 16:1-35
- ❖ Israel's rebellion against God, Numbers 20:24, Deuteronomy 1:26
- ❖ Saul's disobedience to God's command, 1 Samuel 12:15
- ❖ Absalom's rebellion against David, 2 Samuel 15-18
- ❖ Revolt of the ten tribes of Northern Israel, 1 Kings 12:16-20
- ❖ The Corinthians rebellion, 1 Corinthians 4:1ff.
- ❖ The Galatians congregation rebellion, Galatians 3:1ff.

Question of discussions

1. What have been the causes of conflict in your church? How were they handled or mishandled?
2. Read the list of causes of rebellion in the local church and select two or three that may have some bearing upon your situation.
3. What are most effective ways of dealing with rebellion among congregational leaders and members who seek to influence congregational direction?

WEEK FIVE

1. Sermon: Faith Under Construction: Exodus 16:1-13

Questions from sermon:

- a. How important is faith for the journey?
 - b. What will you discover when your faith is under construction?
- ### 2. Bible Study: *Setting the House in Order: A Guide to Leading Change in the Local Church*: Overcoming Rebellion Against Spiritual Authority.

SERMON

Faith Under Construction

(Exodus 16:1-13)

This statement of discontentment is expressed by the children of Israel in Exodus 16:2-3. It reads, “And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Aaron and Moses in the wilderness: And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pot, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” Moving to higher grounds, the pursuit of actualizing our potential and fulfilling our possibilities will not be without some challenges that are uncomfortable and agonizing. The incident in Exodus 16 occurred two months after their departure from Egypt. Therefore, the amount of food that they were accustomed to was not the same. Subsequently, an issue of hunger surfaced.

However, hunger, might not necessarily be a matter of an approaching-demise. Hunger to a degree, is predicated by a routine to which the body has become accustomed, not necessarily a cycle to which the body naturally demands. It can be adjusted, but not without some discomfort and agony. Furthermore, Kirsch asserts that the complaint was so palpably false. He wrote:

Meat was a rarity and a delicacy even among ordinary peasants and workers in ancient Egypt -Herodotus, for example, came upon an inscription on one pyramid that inventoried the precise quantities of onion, radish, and garlic that sustained the men who had labored to quarry and raise the stones. Mere slaves, and especially foreign slaves, would have tasted the savory contents of the fleshpot even less often. In their exasperation they spoke untruths, the rabbi explained, for in reality they had suffered from want of food in Egypt, too, as the Egyptians had not given them enough to eat.¹⁸

One thing is certain, when people's normal routine is changed there will be a disillusion of their past. They will begin to exaggerate how wonderful their past was. Here is a pondering question - Would I prefer being hungry at the expense of being free or do I prefer being full at the expense of being in slavery? The children of Israel bragged about being full when they sat by the fleshpot, but they were also in slavery. Did they forget how the Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage?

Nevertheless, the insult in this statement of discontentment was against God. They said, "Would to God we had died by the hand of the lord in the land of Egypt." Notice, in this instance, Moses did nothing. He does not cry out unto the Lord. Again, the statement of discontentment was not being expressed against Moses but it was against

¹⁸ Kirsch, 242.

God. Moses says to the people in Exodus 16:8, “your murmurings are not against us, but against God.” Since their murmuring was against God, the Lord stepped in and gave Moses unsolicited instructions. Their change of routine was instigated, not by Moses, by God. Furthermore, only God can deal with the metamorphosis of a people’s faith that is under construction. Only God can satisfy their hunger. So when people make a statement of discontentment when there is a change in their normal routine, our best response could be to just do nothing. To distort the past at the expense of rejecting the challenge of the present could be a dishonoring of the grace and power of God. In that case our best response is to just allow God to step in because their statement of discontentment could be an insult against God.

WHEN YOUR FAITH IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

1. *You will discover your location*= It will tell you where you stand with God. The children of Israel were angry with God but they took it out on Moses. Are you angry with God or someone? Pastor Burnside calls it “counter transference.” You put what you are going through on someone else.

2. *You will discover your vocation*- Now that things are not going my way “How I am going to work it.” Either I will complain or be creative.

3. *You will discover a validation*- God gave them something to fulfill their predicament, bread and manna. God will validate a situation to make it work for your good.

The Hebrew word *manna* means “What is it?” (v. 15), the statement of the Jews when they could not explain this new food

that God had sent. “Great is the mystery of godliness,” writes Paul in 1 Tim. 3:16. “God was manifest in the flesh.”¹⁸

Questions from Sermon

- a. How important is faith for the journey?
- b. What will you discover when your faith is under construction?

BIBLE STUDY

SETTING THE HOUSE IN ORDER

by

Geoffrey V. Guns

Overcoming Rebellion Against

Spiritual Leadership Authority

So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day. 1 Kings

12:19 NIV

¹⁸Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's expository outlines on the Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books), Ex 16:1.

Problem of Spiritual Rebellion in the Church Today

The question of authority and submission to spiritual authority is one of the most difficult organizational problems that church leaders face today. Church spiritual leaders must often contend with members and leaders who are disrespectful, disinterested, and who may completely disregard the word of God and its teaching about biblical and pastoral authority. Much of the scorn for spiritual leadership authority is directed against members and leaders who may give support to the Senior Pastor.

Every rebellious congregation has members who are out to destroy the Senior Pastor. In his book, *Clergy Killers: Guidance for Pastors and Congregations Under Attack*, G. Lloyd Reidger says, "Clergy killers are people who intentionally target pastors for serious injury and destruction." There are members of congregations who see it as their responsibility to oppose and depose, if possible the church's spiritual leadership. They resist all efforts at compromised and work to derail the ministry of God's church. These are people who refuse to submit to the leadership authority of the pastor. Dr. Kortright Davis one of my doctoral professors at Howard University, states that a recent study discovered that the three most stressful areas of a pastor's life are "church politics, financial shortfall and difficult relationships with staff and other church officials." Internal politics can reduce a congregation to spiritual ruins. When believers become dissatisfied with the direction of the church, Satan plants within their spirits the spirit of financial non-support. This becomes political intimidation through the "pocketbook."

Satan does not limit his handiwork to unspiritual lay people. He uses men and women who have been called into pastoral ministry as well. Pastors can have just as negative an impact upon the church's ministry as lay member. They can be obstacles and stumbling blocks to the willingness of God's people to grow and move forward. They can derail the purposes of God, by being narrow-minded and selfishly motivated (see Numbers 13:1-3, 25-33; 1 Samuel 2:12-17; 8-1-3). Ungodly pastoral leaders can engage in unhealthy relationships with members of the congregation, killing their spiritual life and turning them into victims of their own sinfulness (see 1 Samuel 2:12-17; 2:22-24). When pastors fail to practice Godly living and do not take heed to their individual spiritual development and growth, they become targets for Satan. Pastors can be so focused on the work of the church that their families suffer, which can be a significant contributor to the demise of their own ministries.

Finally, we must come to grips with why men and women have such disdain for spiritual, political and business leaders today. We have witnessed failures in leadership at all levels and in every sphere of society. Leadership failures come in all shapes and sizes. We live in a time when leaders have fallen from grace in such a way that many believes feel the kingdom work has been permanently jeopardized. Clearly that is not true! God always has a generation of men and women who have not bowed down to the Gods of this world. There are scores of Godly men and women around the world whose hearts are filled with a passion for the things of God.

Leaders in and out of the church have fallen victims to the seductive scourge and power of temptation. The lust for power and money has been the downfall of many men

and women of God. Who can forget the Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker tragedy, or Jimmy Swaggert standing before a national television audience, crying and confessing his sins. Presidents have been just as guilty as preachers and lay people. Richard Nixon lied to the American public about his knowledge of the Water gate break-ins. Bill Clinton was impeached by congress for sexual misconduct and lying under oath. African American churches have had their share of religious scandals, law suits and have endured misconduct by their preachers as well.

Defeating Satan and loosening his grip upon the spiritual life of the congregation is essential to the spiritual growth of the church. We cannot be the voice of conscience and community transformation when the church is suffering from internal discouragement and disarray.

Sometimes congregations can be faced with the presence of spiritual strongholds that have been erected in the hearts of members. There can be strongholds of traditionalism, institutionalism, routine, dead works, dry worship, or other things that limit God's right to lead. A dead congregation cannot grow spiritual nor is it in a position to serve as the foundation for helping the saints of God grow. Strongholds can be destructive to the overall spiritual climate of the church. Congregations must work to pull down and defeat strongholds (see 2 Corinthians 10:2-5). Congregations must take decisive spiritual measures to reduce and eliminate the demonic presence of rebellion within a congregation.

Signs of the “Spirit of Rebellion” in the Congregation

Biblical references: 1 Corinthians 1:10-11; 5:1-8; 9:1-9; Galatians 1:6-9; 3:1-9; 5:16-21; Philippians 1:15-17, 27; 4:1; Colossians 2:8; 1 Timothy 3:6; 5:22; 2 Timothy 3:14; Titus 3:1-3, 9; Revelation 2:12-14, 20-21; 3:14-17.

- ❖ Ineffective organizational leadership
- ❖ Novices and spiritually immature persons in leadership
- ❖ Unaccountable pastoral and lay leadership
- ❖ Constant turnover in the office of the Pastor
- ❖ Declines in membership, giving, and in participation in the church
- ❖ Congregational focus on maintenance and not ministry
- ❖ Emergence of leaders who fight “the set man or woman of God”
- ❖ Declining or decimated spiritual life among the congregation
- ❖ Worship that is dry and that fails to minister to the real spiritual needs and hunger of the congregation
- ❖ A history and pattern of continuous conflict, division and rebellion against spiritual authority
- ❖ Patterns of false and deceptive teachings
- ❖ Emergence of individuals who are fractious and create tension and confusion within the congregation

- ❖ Groups competing for prominence, power or position
- ❖ Ineffective ministries apathy, and lack of clear spiritual focus
- ❖ Contentious relationships among the congregation
- ❖ Selection of unspiritual, novices for important leadership functions
- ❖ Emergence of competing congregational visions for the church
- ❖ Disrespect for the set man or woman of God

Remedies for Overcoming the Spirit of Rebellion

- ❖ The Senior Pastor must call the congregation to a period of fasting, prayer, and repentance. Seek God's forgiveness of the sin and spirit of rebellion. This involves canceling meetings, rehearsals, and teaching sessions. Prayer is the blood flow that makes the heart beat of the congregation work.
- ❖ Create a climate of submissiveness in the body through preaching, teaching, and modeling. The congregation's culture has to be changed from ruling and running things to serving and submitting.
- ❖ The Senior Pastor should spend personal time in prayer for and with the leaders of the congregation. The congregation must be open and willing to receive sound doctrine and instruction on how to behave in the church.
- ❖ The Senior Pastor must teach and preach about biblical order in God's Kingdom, which includes the church.
- ❖ Recognize that the spirit of rebellion lives and thrives in some congregations. When rebellion is present it kills congregational growth momentum and stifles the introduction of new ministries.

- ❖ The Senior Pastor must gather around him or her men and women who will not only pray with and for him, but will courageously be with him or her and stand with him or her in the time of testing and challenge (see 2 Samuel 18:1-4)

Questions for Dialogue

1. Read Numbers 16. Why are competing visions a detriment in the life of a congregation? What can be done to limit the rise of competing visions?
2. Why is it essential that the entire congregation deal with rebellion in its midst?
3. Discuss the contents of the church. Do you agree or disagree with the contents?

Ministry Planning Worksheet

Use the following template to evaluate how you plan to achieve a desired outcome that will help to bring about transformation in the lives of participants (discipleship).¹

Name of ministry:	
Ministry/class objective: (This is the desired outcome for your participants and your church as a result of offering the ministry/class—perhaps your vision or mission statement for the ministry/class)	
What can your participants expect from you and/or the ministry/class as a result of their involvement?	
What do you expect from your participants?	
How are the above expectations being communicated?	
How do you currently evaluate results?	

What results are you achieving?	
What will you do to enhance the ministry/class to achieve better results?	

AGENDA

Purpose of Meeting: _____

Opening:

Connect: _____

Prayer: _____

Review of last meeting/action items: _____

Content:

What	Desired Outcome	Who	How	Time

--	--	--	--	--

Closing:

Summary

Review Action Steps/Who/Time

Next Agenda

Thanks/Celebration/Recognition

Joys & Concerns and Prayer¹⁹

¹⁹ Ibid., 118.

Strategic Planning Update Form

Ministry Team _____

Director _____

Significant Accomplishments _____

1.

2.

3.

Top Opportunity Areas _____

1.

2.

3.

Key Learnings...

Next Steps...

WEEK SIX

Sermon: A Servant Leader: John 13:1-17

Questions from sermon:

- a. What is a servant leader?
- b. What is a requirement for servant leadership?
- c. When Jesus washed the disciple's feet, it was a sign of what? Should leaders have this same attribute?

A SERVANT LEADER

John 13:1-17

Jesus was successful in mission because he was a servant. As a leader, he was a perfect model for all to follow. He taught his disciples what true greatness was all about. Mark's gospel points out that, "They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the road?' But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest. Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.'

He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, 'Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent

me.”²⁰ His lesson on greatness teaches us that the one “who is the greatest is the servant.” Guns points out that Robert K. Greenleaf’s ideas about servant leadership which came from reading Hermann Hesse’s *Journey to the East* is a good example of servant leadership. He wrote that, “In this story, we see a band of men on a mythical journey, probably also Hesse’s own journey. The central figure of the story is Leo, who accompanies the party as the servant who does their menial chores, but who also sustains them with his spirit and his song. He is a person of extraordinary presence. All goes well until Leo disappears.

The group falls into disarray and the journey is abandoned. They cannot make it without the servant Leo. The narrator, one of the parties, after some years of wandering, finds that Leo is taken into the order that had sponsored the journey. There he discovers that Leo, whom he had known first as servant, was in fact the titular head of the Order, its guiding spirit, a great and noble leader.”²¹ In order for us to be great leaders we have to be servants first. Jesus was a servant leader. He took on the menial tasks and stoop to do the jobs that no one else would do. Greenleaf remarked, “The great leader is seen as servant first, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness.”²² A great example of the servant spirit that Jesus presented to His followers can be seen in John 13:4-17 during the Passover. Prior to Him be crucified, Jesus washes their feet. He uses that as a

²⁰ Mark 9:33-37.

²¹ Guns, 53.

²² Ibid.

teaching moment for the disciples to understand that washing each other's feet is a sign of great humility. Guns point out that, "The point of the washing was two-fold.

First, Jesus wanted to demonstrate to His disciples what it meant to be a servant.

Definitions are fine, but living examples are clearer. *Second*, when Jesus washed their feet, it was a symbol of spiritual cleaning. Every leader within the church must examine their spirituality. Am I doing the things necessary to develop and maintain a committed and close relationship with the Lord? If you and I expect to be Christ like leaders, we must possess a spirit of humility and service."²³

Jesus "loved His own," the passage begins. It then goes on to describe a foot-washing. Clad only in a light robe, Jesus took a basin of water and began to wash His disciples' feet. Peter was deeply upset. Jesus, his Lord, stooping to serve him like a common household slave! Never!

But Jesus insisted, and later explained. The simple ritual (1) reflected a great theological truth, (2) gave His followers an example, and (3) helped show how we today are to relate to the strangers who slip in among us.

(1) *The theological truth*. In the ancient world a person might bathe at home or in public baths. After such a thorough cleansing, he would strap on his sandals and walk the dusty streets. When a person entered a friend's house, a servant would wash the film of dust and dirt from his feet. The body was clean, but the feet, having been in contact with the world, needed constant cleansing.

²³ Ibid.54.

In answer to Peter's objection, and then to his request that Jesus wash "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well," Jesus pointed out that Peter had already been cleansed (bathed). All that was required now was the continued washing away of the dust that might accumulate from traveling in the streets.

Many commentators take this exchange to suggest that in salvation, believers are completely cleansed. But in our daily life we may pick up contaminations that require Jesus' continual washings (forgiveness). "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean," Jesus explained (v. 10).

(2) *The example.* Jesus went on to explain that His actions set an example—an object lesson in humility. If the disciples' Teacher and Lord stooped to wash their feet, they should have no hesitation to stoop and serve one another. "I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him." Humbling ourselves to serve each other is Jesus' way to greatness.

(3) *The challenge.* It's striking to realize that Judas was one of those whose feet Jesus washed. The betrayer was served in the same way as the faithful, and through it all, Jesus knew who was going to betray Him.

How is this an example and a challenge to us? You and I know there will be those in a fellowship of believers who have not yet responded to Jesus' message of forgiveness. Will they respond, or will they prove to be like Judas? Should we try to root them out or make distinctions in the way we treat the "true" brothers, and "false"? Never! Within the

fellowship of faith we are to serve brother and Judas alike, even as Jesus stooped to wash all of their feet in that Upper Room.²⁴

Questions from sermon:

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²⁴ L. O Richards, *The Teacher's Commentary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1987).

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Questions for Dialogue

4. Read Numbers 16. Why are competing visions a detriment in the life of a congregation? What can be done to limit the rise of competing visions?
 5. Why is it essential that the entire congregation deal with rebellion in its midst?
 6. Discuss the contents of the church. Do you agree or disagree with the contents?
-

APPENDIX B
PRE AND POST TEST RESULTS

APPENDIX B

PRE-TEST RESULTS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	No answer	Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree
									0.0	8.3	91.7
1	0	0	0	8.3	25.0	58.3	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
2	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	41.7	58.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
3	0	0	0	0.0	33.3	58.3	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
4	0	0	0	0.0	25.0	58.3	16.7	0.0	0.0	8.3	91.7
5	0	0	0	8.3	0.0	41.7	50.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	91.7
6	0	0	0	8.3	25.0	33.3	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
7	0	0	0	0.0	8.3	50.0	41.7	0.0	41.7	25.0	33.3
8	16.7	0.0	25.0	25.0	8.3	25.0	0.0	0.0	58.3	16.7	25.0
9	8.3	41.7	8.3	16.7	0.0	8.3	16.7	0.0	0.0	8.3	91.7
10	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	58.3	25.0	8.3	0.0	0.0	8.3	91.7
11	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	8.3	75.0	8.3	0.0	0.0	16.7	83.3
12	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	25.0	33.3	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	42.3
13	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	33.3	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
14	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	41.7	58.3	0.0	75.0	16.7	8.3
15	16.7	41.7	16.7	16.7	0.0	8.3	0.0	0.0	8.3	0.0	91.7
16	0.0	0.0	8.3	0.0	16.7	25.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
17	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	33.3	58.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
18	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	33.3	58.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
19	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	25.0	58.3	0.0	0.0	8.3	91.7
20	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	50.0	33.3	8.3	9.2	6.3	81.7

Summary:

The pre-test mean percentage of questions answered "Strongly Disagree" was 9.2%

The pre-test mean percentage of questions answered "neutrally was 6.3%

The pre-test mean percentage of questions answered "Strongly Agree" was 81.7%

Assumption: Persons not answering the question at all, were neutral

POST -TEST

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	No answer	Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	41.7	33.3	16.7	0.0	16.7	83.3
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	33.3	58.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
3	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	8.3	41.7	41.7	0.0	0.0	8.3	91.7
4	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	33.3	50.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	83.3
5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	50.0	41.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	41.7	41.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	41.7	41.7	8.3	0.0	8.3	91.7
8	41.7	8.3	16.7	16.7	0.0	8.3	8.3	0.0	66.7	16.7	16.7
9	41.7	8.3	25.0	8.3	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	75.0	8.3	16.7
10	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	8.3	66.7	8.3	0.0	0.0	16.7	83.3
11	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	58.3	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
12	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
13	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	25.0	58.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
14	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
15	33.3	16.7	8.3	25.0	0.0	8.3	0.0	8.3	58.3	25.0	8.3
16	0.0	0.0	8.3	0.0	8.3	25.0	58.3	0.0	8.3	0.0	91.7
17	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	25.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
18	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	33.3	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
19	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	25.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
20	8.3	0.0	8.3	0.0	8.3	41.7	33.3	0.0	16.7	0.0	83.3
									11.3	5.8	82.5

Summary:

The post test mean percentage of questions answered "Strongly Disagree" was 11.3%

The post test mean percentage of questions answered "neutrally" was 5.8%

The post test mean percentage of questions answered "Strongly Agree" was 82.5%

Assumption: Persons not answering the question at all, were neutral

Analysis:

After training was received, there was a mean percentage variance of questions answered "Strongly Disagree" of 2.1

After training was received, there was a mean percentage variance of questions answered neutrally of .4

After training was received, there was a mean percentage variance of questions answered "Strongly Agree" of 0.8

Pretest Post test Variance

9.2	11.3	2.1
6.3	5.8	-0.4
81.7	82.5	0.8

The Hypothesis was validated with a 2.1 variance.

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